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COMMENTARY

ON

THE PSALMS,

BY

E. W. HENGSTENBERG,

DR. AND PROFESSOR OF THEOLOGY IN BERLIN.

VOL. III.

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TRANSLATED BY THE

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THE present Volume of the FOREIGN THEOLOGICAL LIBRARY has been enlarged considerably beyond the regular size, in order to comprize the whole of the remainder of HENGSTENBERG on the PSALMS. Of the portion contained in this volume, it may be proper to state that the translation, as far as the close of Psalm cxxvi., is by Mr Thomson, the remainder by Mr Fairbairn. The Treatises at the close have a separate paging, from its having been found convenient to print that part of the translation before the rest could be got ready for the press. By some accident the short general introduction to the group of Psalms, cxxxv.–cxlvi., was omitted at its proper place between Ps. cxxxiv. and cxxxv.; and it has been inserted at the close of the group, at p. 546. The translators have not thought it necessary to append any notes or explanations of their own, with the exception of a brief statement at the close of the Treatises, for which the translator of that portion is alone responsible.

ERRATA.

In Ps. cxx., p. 412; Ps. cxxi., p. 418; Ps. cxxii., p. 426; Ps. cxxiii., p. 432, *for* Pilgrims *read* Pilgrimages.

THE

BOOK OF PSALMS.

PSALM LXXIX.

THE main division of the Psalm contains twelve verses. These are divided, as is frequently the case, into three strophes, each consisting of four verses. Ver. 1-4 contains the representation of the misery:—the land of the Lord has been taken possession of by the *heathen*, the temple desecrated, Jerusalem laid in ruins, the *servants* of God have been put to death, the *people* of God become the objects of contempt to their neighbours. The second and third strophes contain *the prayer*. The *conclusion*, ver. 13, containing the result of the whole, gives expression to confidence.

The Psalm stands nearly related to the lxxiv.; the situation is the same, and they come a good deal in contact as regards the expression. Both Psalms refer to the Chaldean invasion. The Psalm before us proceeds on the supposition that the seventy-fourth had been previously composed, and *supplements* it. In the seventy-fourth Psalm the *destruction of the sanctuary* is pre-eminently and almost exclusively brought forward; but in the seventy-ninth it is referred to very briefly, for the purpose of indicating the passages which connect the two Psalms, and other subjects are put in the foreground. There is no good reason for the assertion which has been made, that the Psalm before us must have been composed previously to the seventy-fourth, as the Temple is there spoken of as entirely *destroyed*,

whereas it is only its *desecration* that is spoken of here. The desecration does not exclude its destruction; the destruction is one of the forms of its desecration. Had the Psalmist designed, in allusion to the seventy-fourth, to speak of the sanctuary in *one single expression*, he could not possibly have found a stronger term than this: the most dreadful thing that can befal the *sanctuary* is that it be *desecrated*. In saying this every thing that can be affirmed of it is said.

Several expositors, both ancient and modern, refer the Psalm to the time of the Maccabees. But there are quite decisive grounds against this view. First, from the close resemblance to Ps. lxxiv., the arguments which were *there* adverted to are of equal force *here*. There are no traces here of any reference to the special relations of the times of the Maccabees. And there are two circumstances which are not suitable to those times: *the laying of Jerusalem in ruins*, ver. 1, and the mention of *nations* and *kingdoms* in ver. 6 (comp. 2 Kings xxiv. 2), whereas in the time of the Maccabees Judah had to do only with a *single* kingdom.[a] There are also two weighty external reasons. Jeremiah was acquainted with the Psalm, and made use of it (comp. at ver. 6), and in 1 Macc. vii. 16 and 17 it is quoted as forming at that time a portion of the sacred volume.[b] It is thus not necessary here to avail ourselves of the general reasons which may be urged against the existence of Maccabean Psalms.[c]

The title, "a Psalm of Asaph," is confirmed by the fact that the Psalm stands closely related to a whole class of Psalms which bear in their titles the name of Asaph. Those critics who re-

[a] The remark of Venema renders it evident that even verses 2 and 3 will not suit the times of the Maccabees: "that the expressions, *they delivered the servants of God to birds and wild beasts, and there was none to bury them*, are to be taken in a restricted sense, as used only of *some*, and in reference to the attempts and intentions of the enemies."

[b] *κατὰ τὸν λόγον ὃν ἐγραψε· σάρκας ὁσίων κ. τ. λ.* The Syrian translation: "according to the word which the *prophet* has written." This is the usual way of quoting Scripture: comp. Harless on Eph. iv. 8. Hitzig translates falsely: according to the words which a *certain one* wrote. The obscure productions of unknown authors are never quoted in this way. The fact that the author omits, in the passage from the Psalm, what does not suit his purpose, renders it evident that the Psalm was not composed for the occasion there referred to: comp. J. D. Michaelis.

[c] Amyrald.: besides it cannot be doubted that there were prophets at the time of Nebuchad. who were able to compose such poems; whereas in the age of Antiochus there were none, at least none whose writings have reached posterity.

ject the titles are unable to explain this similarity admitted by themselves, which obtains among all the Asaphic Psalms, even among those which were composed at different eras. If we follow the title the reason of this is clear as day. The descendants of Asaph looked upon themselves as the instruments by which the Asaph of David's time, their illustrious ancestor, *continued to speak*, and therefore they very naturally followed as closely in his footsteps as possible: the later descendants, moreover, would always have the compositions of their more early ancestors before their minds. The unity of the persons named in the titles is connected with the unity of character by which all these Psalms are pervaded. Any one who composed at his own hand, and did not look at his ancestor or the early or contemporaneous instruments of that ancestor, could not have adopted it.

Ver. 1–4.—Ver. 1. *O God, the heathen have come into thine inheritance, they have polluted thy holy temple, they have laid Jerusalem in ruins.* Ver. 2. *They have given the bodies of thy servants for food to the fowls of heaven, the flesh of thy saints to the wild beasts of the earth.* Ver. 3. *They have shed their blood like water round about Jerusalem, and there was no one to bury.* Ver. 4. *We have become a reproach to our neighbours, a scorn and derision to them that are round about us.*—On ver. 1, Calvin: "The Psalmist says, the order of nature is, as it were, inverted; the heathen have come into the inheritance of God." Berleb.: "Faith utters a similar complaint in its struggles: the heathen have made an inroad into my *heart* as thy inheritance." The *pollution* of the temple by the heathen presupposes its previous pollution by the Israelites: comp. Ex. v. 11, xxiii. 38. Ps. lxxiv. 7, its parallel. On דְּיוּרְךָ in ver. 2, comp. at Ps. l. 10. That the אֶרֶץ is to be understood of the earth and not of the land is obvious from the term in contrast *heaven*.—The expression, "and there was none to bury," points to a great and general desolation, such as did not exist at any other period except during the Chaldean invasion.—Ver. 4 is from Ps. xliv. 13.

Ver. 5–8.—Ver. 5. *How long, O Lord, wilt thou be angry for ever? shall thy jealousy burn like fire!* Ver. 6. *Pour out thy floods of wrath upon the heathen who know thee not, and upon the kingdoms which do not call upon thy name.* Ver. 7.

For he devours Jacob, and they lay waste his pasture. Ver. 8. *Remember not against us the iniquities of our ancestors, make haste to surprise us with thy tender mercies, for we have become very much reduced.*—On "how long . . . . for ever," in ver. 5, comp. at Ps. lxxiv. 9; xiii. 1. On the second clause, Deut. xxix. 19. Ex. xx. 5.[a]—In ver. 6, the heathen and the kingdoms are not at all the heathen nations generally, but those who had risen up against Israel. The prayer rests upon what God does constantly. Judgment begins at the house of God, but it proceeds thence to those whom God has employed as the instruments of his punishment: the storm of the wrath of God always remains to fall at last upon the *world* at enmity with his church; comp. Deut. xxxii. Ez. xxxviii. 39.[b]—The sing. אכל in ver. 7 denotes the *one soul* which animates the many membered body of the enemies of the church of God. All the nations and kingdoms referred to in ver. 6 served the king of Babylon. It is better to take נוה in the sense of *pasture* than of *habitation*: comp. the מרעית in ver. 13: they eat up Israel, the poor flock, and lay waste his pasture, his land. Ver. 6 and 7 are repeated almost word for word in Jer. x. 25. It has been alleged in favour of Jeremiah being the original author, that the *prophecy* was uttered *before the destruction.* But this reason is of no weight. The prophecy, which designedly bears no particular date, was, at least in its present form, written after the destruction; it contains much moreover which represents the destruction as an event which had already taken place, while other portions of it again refer to it as still future, (a peculiarity which admits of explanation from the circumstance that the prophet is here giving a summary view and the substance of what had been spoken at different times); ver. 25 itself takes for granted that the heathen had already devoured Israel and laid waste his pasturage. On the other hand, and in favour of the *priority* of the Psalm before us, it may be urged that in all such cases there is

[a] Ven.: The interrogative form conveys an insinuation that God ought not to destroy utterly the whole people, as there remain among them so many pious, to be chastised and purified (Dan. xi. 35), but not to be destroyed.

[b] Arnd: "The difference is this: God's wrath will burn for ever against unbelievers; with believers, however, when they deserve punishment his wrath burns fiercely indeed, but not eternally,—he visits them with the rod and chastisement for a short while, and with a view to their improvement."

a presumption in favour of Jeremiah borrowing—it being his usual manner to do so; that in this chapter there are manifestly references to other Psalms, the preceding verse being borrowed from Ps. vi. 1, (comp. Küper p. 159); that in Jeremiah the words occur without any connection whatever, while in the Psalm before us the *prayer* that the Lord would pour out the flood of his wrath upon the heathen, is appended without anything intervening to the *complaint* that his zeal is burning like fire against Israel—the "pour out" refers back to "they have poured out," in ver. 3, (Mich. propter, sanguinem tuorum copiose effusum effunde, see Ps. lxix. 24),—comp. ver. 10; that the difficult singular אכל is changed into the plural; and finally, that the passage is expanded exactly in the style of Jeremiah in quoting passages, who can leave nothing short and round,—*and they have eaten him and consumed him.*—ראשנים in ver. 8, where it stands alone, signifies nothing else than *ancestors*, not *antiquity*. The reference to Lev. xxvi. 45, which it is impossible not to observe, is altogether against the exposition, *the former sins:* "and I remember to them the covenant of their ancestors whom I brought out of the land of Egypt before the eyes of the heathen, that I might be their God,"—God does not remember the *sins* of their ancestors, but according to his own promise, the *covenant* which he made with them. Comp. also Lev. xxvi. 39, where instead of "ancestors" we have "fathers:" they desired that they may not be treated according to this verse, but according to the 45th of this chapter, or rather, that after they had experienced the treatment referred to in the 39th verse, they might now also enjoy the 45th, comp. Lam. v. 7. The guilty fathers do not at all stand in opposition to the innocent children. It is the uniform doctrine of scripture that no one is punished unless he be personally guilty, and that it is only in the ungodly children that the sin of the fathers which is represented as increased in them that is punished: comp. the Beitr. iii. p. 544 ss. The mention of the sins of the fathers, so far from exculpating, indicates the depth and the magnitude of the guilt. Calvin: "They acknowledge an obstinancy of long standing, in which they have hardened themselves against God. And this acknowledgment corresponds to the prophetic punishments. For sacred history testifies that the punishment of the captivity was postponed till God had experi-

enced that their wickedness was incurable:" comp. Is. lxv. 7. On קדם *to surprise*, comp. at Ps. xxi. 4.

Ver. 9–12.—Ver. 9. *Help us, O God, our Salvation, for thy name's glory's sake; and deliver us and pardon our sins for thy name's sake.* Ver. 10. *Why should the heathen say, Where is their God? May the vengeance of the blood of thy servants which they have shed become known to the heathen before our eyes.* Ver. 11. *May the sighing of those who are bound come before thee. According to the greatness of thine arm preserve the dying.* Ver 12. *And recompense to our neighbours sevenfold into their bosom their reproach wherewith they have reproached thee, O Lord.*—In the 9th verse the church implores the Lord to redeem that pledge of similar future deeds, which she got in his *early* dealings. The name, and *the honour of the name, i. e.*, his glory (comp. at Ps. xxix. 1, 2), are in reality the same:—for the sake of thy historically manifested glory (comp. at Ps. xxiii. 3), for the purpose of now verifying this in sight of the blaspheming enemies, and to their terror.—The first half of the 10th verse is word for word from Jo. ii. 17, and this passage again rests on Ex. xxxii. 12. Num. xiv. 13 ss. Deut. ix. 28. On comparing these passages, especially the one last quoted, it becomes obvious, that "Where is their God?" signifies, "Where is his far-famed love towards his people? and where is his omnipotence?" The ground is not one of a mere external character:—the heathen would have *had good reason* to speak thus, and therefore God must not give them any occasion to do so; he *must* make known his omnipotence, and his love, in delivering his people; they *cannot* be for ever given over to misery: comp. the Christology iii. p. 657, &c. In the second clause, the גוים is written without the Vau: comp. at Ps. lxxiv. 11. "Before our eyes," is from Deut. vi. 22. "The vengeance of the blood of thy servants" points back to "He will avenge the blood of his servants," in the conclusion of the Song of Moses, in Deut. xxxii. 43.—In ver. 11, the whole people appears under the emblem of a prisoner. At the first clause we ought to add: *as it once did in Egypt*, Ex. ii. 23—25. The people of God have the privilege, in every trouble, of looking to the early deliverances as pledges of those yet to come; and hence they possess a sure ground of confidence. The world, when it prays, prays only as an experiment,

having no connection whatever with history. On "according to the greatness of thine arm," comp. Num. xiv. 19. Deut. iii. 24. Inward greatness is meant, energy. The תמותה is a noun formed from the third fem. fut. (comp. in Balaam p. 120, &c.), very probably by the Psalmist himself. Hence it cannot mean "death," but only "that which dies," "the dying." The sons of the dying are those who belong to him as a personified race, and thus the dying themselves, just like "the sons of the needy" in Ps. lxxii. 4.—On "in their lap," ver. 12, comp. Is. lxv. 6–7. Jer. xxxii. 18. Luke vi. 38. *Their reproach*, inasmuch as they say, *Where is their God?* ver. 10.

Ver. 13. *And we are thy people and sheep of thy pasture, therefore we shall praise thee for ever, recount thy praise through all generations.* The verse is expressive of confidence: "we shall praise thee" being equivalent to "thou shalt give us occasion to do so;" comp. Ps. xliv. 8. In reference to "the sheep of thy pasture," comp. at Ps. lxxiv. 1.

PSALM LXXX.

The Psalmist prays for help on behalf of the oppressed church, particularly on behalf of Joseph and Benjamin, ver. 1–3, and describes, in mournful language, their oppression in ver. 4–7. In ver. 8–13, Israel appears under the image of a vine tree, which at first is carefully attended to, and had spread forth luxuriantly, but now had become altogether destroyed. In ver. 14–19, the Psalmist prays that God would again take this vine tree under his gracious protection.

Ver. 1–7 are evidently to be considered as an *Introduction;* and the individual character of the Psalm is to be found in the figure of the vine tree.

The formal arrangement is obvious,—so obvious, that light is thrown from this Psalm upon others, where otherwise there would have been ground for uncertainty; and even from this Psalm alone, the significance of the numbers in the arrangement of the Psalms is placed beyond a doubt. The whole, inclusive of the significant title, contains twenty verses, two decades. The introduction contains seven, and the main division twelve,—the numbers of the

covenant, and of the covenant people. The seven is divided into three and four, the preliminary complaint and the preliminary petition; the twelve is divided into six and six, the expanded complaint, which comes in immediately after the preliminary one, and the expanded prayer, the first and the last verses of which are the same.

The fundamental tone of the whole Psalm is given in the words: "O God, lead us back, and cause thy face to shine, and us to be delivered." These words occur three times, like the Mosaic blessing to which they allude, for the purpose of making a deeper impression upon the mind,[a] at the end of the first and of the second part of the Introduction, ver. 3 and 7, and at the end of the main division and of the whole, ver. 19: the names of God in these same verses are arranged in an ascending series,—*God*, ver. 3; *God of Hosts*, ver. 7; *Jehovah, God of Hosts*, ver. 19. They are *wanting* at the end of the first part of the main division, because it is bound together by the unity of the figure of the vine tree: the twelve also is not so decidedly divided by the six, which is destitute of any meaning of its own, as is the seven by the three and the four. The beginning, moreover, of the second half of the main division is externally indicated by the address, "O God of Hosts," ver. 14, just as the beginning of the second part of the Introduction by the address, "Jehovah, God of Hosts," ver. 4, indicating the termination prescribed for the refrain, to which it had to advance by degrees.

The Psalm is a remarkable testimony on behalf of the catholic spirit by which the true church of God has been always pervaded —an illustration of the apostolic saying, "when one member suffers, all the members suffer along with it." Like the seventy-seventh Psalm, to which it is closely allied, it gives adequate expression to the painful feelings awakened in Judah's mind by the captivity of the ten tribes; comp. the three times repeated "*lead us back*," ver. 3, 7, 19. The Septuagint have already with accuracy written: *ὑπὲρ τοῦ Ἀσσυρίου*. For it is incontrovertibly evident, from reasons which never would have been overlooked, had it not been for the perverse disposition to assign to the Psalms

a Calvin: God did not design to dictate a vain repetition of words to his people; but this support is frequently held out to them, when oppressed with evils, in order that nevertheless they may courageously arise.

the latest possible date, that we cannot refer the Psalm with several interpreters, to the Chaldean invasion, nor yet, with others, to the times of the Maccabees, nor indeed to any suffering which befel Judah. 1. The vine tree appears as destroyed to a considerable extent, and even as deprived partly of its branches, but still it is standing in the holy land: the people of the Lord appear, as is evident from the thrice-repeated prayer, *lead us back*, partly as led away; and yet they are also in possession of their own land, as is manifest from the title, "to the Chief Musician," which is wanting in Ps. lxxiv. and lxxix., and which marks out this Psalm as designed for a public service in the temple. By this the reference to the Chaldean destruction is wholly excluded. 2. In the very first verse, God is addressed by the title: he who leads Joseph like a flock. The idea is altogether untenable that Joseph, who appears always as the leader of the ten tribes, and who is spoken of, in Ps. lxxviii. 67, in opposition to Judah, is here used for the whole of Israel, or for Judah, in whom Israel at the time existed. Even in Obed. ver. 18, the house of Joseph denotes the ten tribes (comp. Caspari), and, in like manner, in Amos vi. 6, Joseph is used only of the ten tribes; comp. Ch. B. Michaelis. 3. In ver. 2, the tribes on whose behalf the help of God is supplicated are Ephraim, Benjamin, and Manasseh. Every thing here depends upon determining whether, in the division of the state into two kingdoms, the Benjamites adhered to Judah or to Joseph. The general view is in favour of the first. (Comp. for example Winer in his dic., Gesenius in his Thesaurus.) It is, however, involved here in inextricable difficulties; as if Benjamin belonged to the kingdom of Judah, and this Psalm refers to the misery of the whole people, there can be no reason assigned why Benjamin is named here, and not Judah. We, on the other hand, maintain that, with the exception of Jerusalem, which lay close on the boundaries of Judah, by whom it was conquered, and by whom, in common with Benjamin, it was inhabited (comp. Raumer, p. 334), and of that portion of its environs which lay on the side of Benjamin, the declivity, namely, slanting down, from the upper city, Benjamin adhered to Joseph. The presumptions are all in favour of this view. Benjamin and Joseph were bound together by ties of an ancient character. They were both the darling sons of beloved Rachel (Gen. xliv. 27–29), and were

united to each other in the tenderest affection, Gen. xliii. 29—30–34. In travelling through the wilderness we find them as here united to each other; comp. Num. ii. 17, &c., x. 21–24. It is clear, from 2 Sam. xix. 21, that the bond of union between Joseph and Benjamin was very close even in David's time: in this passage Simei says that he comes first of the whole house of Joseph. Further, Benjamin is the very last tribe who can be supposed to have entertained any friendly feeling towards Judah, inasmuch as the honour and pre-eminence which belonged to it during the reign of Saul was transferred to Judah (comp. 1 Sam. xxii. 7); and history affords evidence that, even in David's time, there existed a spirit of deep-rooted hostility. Shimei, on the rebellion of Absalom, gave utterance to the spirit of the tribe; the rebel Sheba (2 Sam. xxi. 1) belonged to Benjamin: and at the numbering of the people, with the exception of Levi, which, from the nature of the case, could not be included, the only tribe which was not numbered was Benjamin, undoubtedly because Joab did not choose to provoke its seditious spirit. If we turn now to the evidence in support of the opposite view, we find, as wholly favouring it, the passage 1 Kings xii. 21, according to which Rehoboam assembled the whole house of Judah and the *tribe of Benjamin*. But a whole series of other passages demonstrates that the author loosely, though, after all, with sufficient accuracy, as the real state of matters was universally known, employed the tribe of Benjamin to denote that small portion of the tribe which was incorporated with Judah, so that we are to supply as understood: so far as it remained faithful to Judah. According to 1 Kings xi. 13, 32, 36, xii. 20, it was only the single tribe of Judah that remained with the house of David; and it is utterly preposterous to suppose that in all these passages Benjamin, which always occupied a place of distinguished honour among the tribes, is passed over in silence, on account of its littleness. In 1 Kings xii. 17, the only individuals not Jews who submitted to the government of Rehoboam are "the children of Israel who dwelt in the cities of Judah." This passage forms the connecting link between xii. 21 and the passages above quoted, and gives to the former the necessary limitation. Further, if we join Benjamin to Judah, it will be impossible to make out the ten tribes; for Simeon, who is commonly reckoned among them, manifestly

cannot be counted. That tribe, according to Gen. xlix. 7, ought to be found like Levi, broken up into pieces; according to Jos. xix. 1, "its inheritance was in the midst of the tribe of Judah," not certainly any contiguous portion of the land, but separate, single cities, lying at a distance from each other: comp. Bachiene i. 2, § 408. The Simeonites belong, assuredly, to "the children of Israel who dwelt in the cities of Judah," as their cities originally were situated within the tribe of Judah, and are enumerated in the list of these cities, Bach. § 409. They must necessarily have held fast by Judah, and probably did so very willingly: it was quite natural that they should amalgamate with Judah, and this is sufficient to explain the fact that they are nowhere mentioned as a part of the kingdom of Judah: on the division into two kingdoms they became extinct as a tribe. This peculiar state of matters explains 1 Kings xi. 30, &c., according to which the whole number of the tribes was twelve, of which one remained faithful to the house of David, and ten took part with Jeroboam. Now, if we leave out Simeon, it becomes necessary to take in Benjamin, in order to complete the number ten.—It is, therefore, evident that the three passages above quoted represent Israel only in a limited sense, whose leading tribes they name, in accordance with original historical relations, and agreeably to later usage; and, therefore, the Psalm cannot be referred either to the Babylonian captivity or to the times of the Maccabees."[a]

Title: *To the Chief Musician, on lilies, a testimony of Asaph, a Psalm.* This title is formed in an original manner after those of the two Davidic Psalms, the sixtieth and the sixty-ninth. "To the Chief Musician" is important, because it shews that the Psalmist is here acting as the organ of the whole church. Instead of אֶל pointing out the object (comp. at title of Ps. vi.) we have עַל in the two fundamental passages. The *lilies* are an emblem of what is lovely (comp. at Ps. xlv.), here, as in Ps. lxix., of the lovely salvation of the Lord, his ישועות: comp. נושעה with which the refrain generally ends, the peculiarly prominent word of the Psalm, and the ישועתה in ver. 2. The עדות which, on account of the accusative, cannot be connected with שׁשנים, signifies always *law*

[a] Calvin: It would have been absurd to have passed over the tribe Judah, and the sacred city itself, and to have given the prominence to Joseph, Manasseh, Ephraim, and Benjamin, if the language had not been designed to apply specially to Israel.

(comp. at Ps. lx. title), and generally denotes *the divine law*, as given in the Books of Moses; in this way also it is used in the Asaphic Psalms lxxviii. 5, lxxxi. 5. That it is used in the same sense here also, that the Psalmist designates his poem *a law*, because he does not prescribe a way of salvation at his own hand, but merely points to the one which had already been described in the law, and comes forward as its expounder, is evident from the reference to the title of Ps. lx., where the original itself from which the Psalmist merely copies, is named יעדות, and from the fact that the Psalm really throughout depends upon the law, especially the refrain which gives its fundamental tone. The particular application of עדות is to be got from the word immediately preceding, *on the lilies*: "a law which treats of the way of obtaining deliverance."[a] The עדות לאסף corresponds to the משכיל לאסף, *an instruction of Asaph* in Psalms lxxiv. and lxxviii.; but it is a stronger and more emphatic expression: comp. also, *Hear, my people, my law* in Ps. lxxviii. 1.

Ver. 1–3.—Ver. 1. *O thou Shepherd of Israel give ear, who leadest Joseph as the sheep; thou who sittest enthroned upon the cherubim, shine forth.* Ver. 2. *Before Ephraim, and Benjamin, and Manasseh, stir up thy strength and come for help to us.* Ver. 3. *O God, lead us back, and cause thy face to shine, and us to be delivered.*—The "thou Shepherd of Israel," in ver. 1 (comp. at Ps. xxiii. 1), refers to Gen. xlviii. 15; xlix. 24, where in Joseph's blessing God is named the Shepherd of Israel. The expression, "who leadest Joseph," &c., is the development of the first clause, and marks directly that part of Israel who at this time stood particularly in need of the shepherd care of God. In the second clause prominence is given to the *omnipotence* of God as the second foundation of the deliverance, just as in the first his care for his people had been especially dwelt upon. It is omnipotence that is indicated by, "thou sittest enthroned upon the cherubim:" comp. at Ps. xviii. 10. The cherubim of the sanctuary are the emblem of the earthly creation. God's sitting above these indicates that this sublunary world with all its powers is subject to him and serves him. "God of hosts" corresponds

[a] Venema: that the pious, when placed in dreadful trouble, might be instructed in the true way of obtaining deliverance and salvation.

to this appellation of God, and denotes as exclusively God's dominion over the heavenly powers as the expression before us denotes his dominion over those of earth. In reference to *shine forth,* comp. at Ps. l. 2. Allusion is made, as appears, to the resplendent symbol of the presence of God during the march through the wilderness. In ver. 2, Benjamin "the little," stands between Ephraim and Manasseh. "*Before* them:"—that is, leading them forward, at their head, as formerly before Israel in the pillar of cloud and the pillar of fire: comp. Dent. xiii. 21, 22, "and the Lord went before them," &c. *Thy strength:*—which now slumbers,—comp. Ps. lxxviii. 65.—The "*lead us back,*" in ver. 3, refers to that portion of the people who had been led into captivity, and who had been described with sufficient distinctness in the preceding clauses, and whom the Psalmist, sympathising with a suffering member, keeps throughout prominently before his eye. The usual sense of שׁוּב in Hiph. is to lead back (comp. Gen. xxviii. 15, where Jacob, who in his exile beyond the Euphrates, and in his restoration to Canaan, typified the fate of his people, is addressed by God, *I bring thee back to this place,* Jer. xii. 15; xvi. 15; xxx. 3): and there is no ground whatever to depart from this usual sense here, more especially as in the 12th and 13th verses we find a lamentation expressed in figurative language over a considerable portion of the people who had been led into captivity. The sense *to bring back to a former condition, to restore* (Luther: *comfort us*), is of very rare occurrence, indeed occurs with certainty only in one passage, Dan. ix. 25: comp. the Christology, p. 2, p. 456. "*Cause thy face to shine,*" is demanded as a fulfilment of the Mosaic blessing, Num. vi. 25: comp. at Ps. iv. 6; xxxi. 16.

Ver. 4–7.—Ver. 4. *O Lord God, God of hosts, how long dost thou smoke against the prayer of thy people?* Ver. 5. *Thou feedest them with tear-bread, and givest them drink in a great measure full of tears.* Ver. 6. *Thou placest us for contention to our neighbours, and our enemies make merry.* Ver. 7. *O God, God of hosts, bring us back, and cause thy face to shine upon us, and us to be delivered.* A heaping up of the names of God similar to that in ver. 4, occurs also in the first verse of the fiftieth Psalm, another of the Psalms of Asaph. In prayer, every thing depends upon God, in the full glory of his being,

walking before the soul. It is only into the bosom of such a God that it is worth while to pour out lamentations and prayers. " Jehovah," corresponding to " thou Shepherd of Israel," in ver. 1, points to the fulness of the love of God towards his people; and " God, God of hosts" corresponding to " who sittest enthroned upon the cherubim," to his infinite power to help them. The Elohim Zebaoth causes no difficulty if we only explain correctly Jehovah Zebaoth: comp. Ps. xxiv. 10. It is manifest from comparing the fundamental passage, Deut. xxix. 19, and the parallel Asaph. passage Ps. lxxiv. 1, that the *smoke* comes into notice only as the attendant of *fire*. It is clear also from these passages that we must translate: *against*, not *at* the prayer of thy people. There is a significant reference to smoke as the standing symbol of prayer, and to its embodiment in the burnt offering: comp. Ps. cxli. 2. Rev. v. 8; viii. 3, 4. Is. vi. 4, " the house was full of smoke," Beitr. iii. 644. The smoke of prayer, according to Lev. xvi. 13, should smother the fire of the wrath of God: but instead of this, God opposes the smoke of his anger to the smoke of prayer. In ver. 5, tear-bread is not at all bread destroyed by tears, but bread composed of tears. This is manifest from the parallel passages: comp. at Ps. xlii. 3, and the second clause: as the tears are *drink* there, they must be *bread* here. It cannot always be, that the Shepherd of Israel, of whom it is said, Ps. xxiii. 5, " thou preparest before me a table in presence of my enemies, ... my cup overfloweth," prepares nothing but *tears* for the food and the drink of his people. That were a very singular *quid pro quo*. The second clause can only be translated: *thou causest them to drink with a measure of tears*. For הִשְׁקָה is constantly construed with the accusative of the person and the thing; but it never occurs with בְּ before the thing. The "measure" is thus the thing that is given to drink (the שָׁלִישׁ as the name of a measure occurs only in one other passage, Is. xl. 12; there is no need for defining its size, it was, at all events, large for tears): " of tears" denotes the contents of the measure.— Ver. 6 alludes to Ps. xliv. 13, on which also Ps. lxxix. 4 depends. The neighbours are always the petty tribes in the immediate neighbourhood of Israel (several interpreters refer incorrectly to the Assyrians and Egyptians), who always availed themselves of those occasions when Israel was oppressed by more powerful nations, to

give vent to their hatred. The מדון the object, the butt of rage expressed in actions, but especially in bitter contempt, "*where is now their God?*" *&c.* The למו as the dat. comm., *i.e.*, according to the heart's desire.

Ver. 8–13.—Ver. 8. *Thou broughtest a vine out of Egypt, thou didst remove the heathen and didst plant it.* Ver. 9. *Thou didst make room before it, and it struck its roots and filled the land.* Ver. 10. *The mountains were covered with its shadow, and the cedars of God with its branches.* Ver. 11. *It sent its boughs to the sea and its shoots to the river.* Ver. 12. *Why then hast thou broken down its wall, so that everything that passes by plunders it?* Ver. 13. *The boar out of the forest wastes it, and whatever stirs in the field feeds of it.*—God cannot leave off, far less destroy a work which he has once begun; this is the truth, on which depends the significance of the contrast between the *once* and the *now*. The fundamental passage for the figurative representation is Gen. xlix. 22, where Joseph, to whom the eye of the Psalmist is continually directed, appears, in reference to his joyful prosperity, as a wall tree by a fountain, whose branches rose high above the walls. The difference is only this, that here instead of the *fruit tree*, the *vine* is introduced, after the example of Isaiah in ch. v. 1–7, where Israel appears as the vineyard of the Lord. It is obvious from the fundamental passage, and from the expanded description which follows, that the point of comparison next to the abundance of beautiful fruit is the luxuriant growth: comp. Hos. xiv. 7, "They shall grow as the vine."—That the הסיע in ver. 8 is to be taken in its usual sense, to *cause to depart*, which it maintains even in Job xix. 10, is evident on comparing the Asaphic passage, from which it is immediately borrowed, Ps. lxxviii. 52, and the fundamental passages, Ex. xii. 37; xv. 22, on which this depends. An affirmation may be made in regard to the spiritual, which could *not* be applied to the natural vine. "*Thou didst remove the heathen*" is taken from Ps. lxxviii. 55, which again depends upon Ex. xxiii. 28; xxxiii. 2; xxxiv. 11. The sons of Asaph always follow in the footsteps of their father. The "*plant*" is from Ps. xliv. 2, to which allusion is also made in ver. 12. The Berleb.: "Shall all this be for nought and in vain? Or hast thou planted it on this account, that the enemies might devour it?" On

פנה in Ps. vii. "to clear," "to clear out," in ver. 10, comp. the Christol. iii. 404. It corresponds to "the clearing out of the stones" of Is. v. 2, and refers to the removal of the original inhabitants of the country. Instead of "it struck its roots," Luther has falsely, "Thou hast made it strike its roots."—The fundamental passages for verses 11 and 12 are Gen. xxviii. 14, where it is said in the promise to Jacob, "thou stretch out on the west and on the east, on the north and on the south," and especially Deut. xi. 24, "every place which the sole of your feet shall tread upon shall be yours, from the wilderness and Lebanon, from the river, the river Euphrates, even unto the west sea shall be your boundaries;"—comp. Josh. i. 4. God had in former times gloriously fulfilled the promises contained in these passages. צלה and ענפיה are in reality both accusatives governed by כסו Pü.; the *mountains* which were covered with the shadow of the vine are the mountains on the south of Canaan, the hill country of Judah, particularly the southermost part of the same, the hill country of the Amorites, which at the commencement of Israel's country met the traveller like a wall; comp. Raumer p. 48. "The wilderness of mountains" is introduced in Ps. lxxv. 7 as *the southern boundary*, in the same way as the mountains are here spoken of as the most southern portion of the land. The *cedars of God* (comp. at Ps. xxxvi. 6) which the boughs of the vine ascend and cover, are, as usual, those of Lebanon (comp. Ps. xxix. 5; xcii. 13; civ. 16), which formed the north boundary of Canaan: comp. Ps. xxix., where Lebanon and the wilderness of Kadesh stand opposed to each other as the northern and southern boundaries of Canaan. The *sea* is the Mediterranean, the *river*, Euphrates. From this antithesis the translation falls to the ground: and his boughs were cedars of God,—which would bring out a monstrous figure.—The ארה *to pluck* (elsewhere only in Song of Sol. v. 1), applies not to the grapes but to the branches:—the luxuriance of the branches formed the subject of the preceding description; and the opposite of that state is described in this clause, as it is in Is. v. 5, Ps. lxxxix. 40, 41. *All who pass by the way:* Berleb.: "for example, Pul, Tiglathpileser, Salmanasser, Senacherib."—*The boar from the forest* (comp. Jerem. v. 4) is according to the analogy of Ps. lxviii. 30. Ez. xxix. 3, where the hippopotamos and the crocodile are em-

blem of Pharaoh, and Ez. xvii., where the eagle indicates Nebuchadnezar, descriptive not of the enemies generally, but of the king of Assyria. "Whatever stirs in the field" (יזז is from the Asaph. Ps. l. 11, the only other passage where it is used of beasts), denotes the whole mass of the nations serving under him.[a]

Ver. 14–19.—Ver. 14. *O God, God of hosts, turn yet back, look from heaven and behold and visit this vine.* Ver. 15. *And maintain that which thy right hand has planted, and the Son whom thou hast made strong for thyself.* Ver. 16. *It is burned with fire, cut down, before the rebuke of thy countenance they perish.* Ver. 17. *May thy hand be upon the man of thy right hand, the Son of Man whom thou hast made strong for thyself.* Ver. 18. *We will not go back, quicken thou us and we will call upon thy name.* Ver. 19. *Lord, God, God of hosts, lead us back, cause thy face to shine and us to be delivered.*—The beginning of the prayer in the main division, ver. 14 is connected with the beginning of the prayer in the introduction, ver. 1. The כנה, ver. 15, is the imper. of כּוּן, *to make firm*, comp. the proper noun, כנניהו, *whom Jehovah hath established.* It is construed first with the accusative, and afterwards with על, which denotes the care and the protection. Against the idea that it is to be considered as a noun, in the sense of a *slip*, it may be urged, that there is no such noun, that the reference to the 8th verse demands that it be the vine-tree that is here spoken of, and that the following verse refers to the vine as if it had previously been spoken of. The *Son* of the second clause is just the spiritual vine. The translation, *a shoot*, according to Gen. xlix. 22, is not only against ver. 17, but also against the sense, as it is not any particular shoot, but the whole vine that is here spoken of. The אמץ should be taken in its usual sense, *to make strong* (comp. the proper noun, *Amaziah*,) rather than in the sense of *to choose*, which depends upon the single and very doubtful passage, Is. xliv. 14. The *singular*, of rare occurrence elsewhere, here and in ver. 17, is accounted for by the allusion to the name of Benjamin, whom the Psalmist here considers as the representative of all Israel. Thy *right hand* and *Son* ought to

[a] Berleb: The beasts represent, in the inner man, the destructive passions by which the vineyard of the soul is torn up and consumed.

read with italics, for the purpose of making this allusion obvious. The Son of the right hand is the Son who stands at the right hand of his earthly and his heavenly father, and who is, consequently, protected by him: Gen. xliv. 20, "his father loves him," and Deut. xxxiii. 12, "the beloved of the Lord," are to be considered as explanations of the name. In so far as Jacob gave this significant name to his son, under the guidance and inspiration of God, it was a pledge of the divine love and help for him, and, at the same time, for all Israel, with whom he is interwoven. The subject in "they perish," in ver. 16, is the children of Israel, the spiritual vine.[a]—Ver. 18 alludes to Ps. xliv. 18, "our heart has not turned back, nor have our steps declined from thy paths." Israel could not say so now; they have *deserved* their misery, they have turned aside to many ways, and, instead of the name of the Lord, they have called upon strange gods (comp. Ps. lxxix. 6), but they promise better; if the Lord will bring them back unto life (Ps. lxxi. 20), they also will walk in a new life. The guilt of Israel is very *tenderly* touched. The Psalmist has no intention of acting the part of Job's friends, he follows the admonition of Job: "have pity upon me, have pity upon me, my friends, for the hand of God is upon me." God has undertaken to *rebuke*, ver. 16, and therefore his servants may well be silent.

PSALM LXXXI.

The exhortation to celebrate the passover with joyful heart, ver. 1–3, is followed by the *basis* on which it rests, ver. 4–7: the passover is the festival of Israel's deliverance, through their Lord and God, from great trouble and deep misery. While the first part points to what the Lord has done for Israel, the second describes the position which Israel ought to occupy towards their Lord: inasmuch as the Lord, who brought Israel out of Egypt, is thus alone Israel's God, sufficient for all his necessities. Israel ought therefore to serve him alone, and leave to the world its imaginary deities,—a preposition, however, to which Israel,

[a] Calvin: "Let us learn, whenever the anger of God burns forth, even in the midst of the flames of the conflagration to cast our griefs into the bosom of God, who wonderfully revives his church from destruction.

alas, has not hitherto responded,—and hence the origin of all his troubles, ver. 8–12. Would that he would now become obedient to the Lord! the salvation of his kingdom would be the consequence, ver. 13–16.

In ver. 1–5 the Psalmist speaks, as is manifest from the conclusion of ver. 5, as the representative of the better self of the church, or, in the language of the Apocalypse, as its angel; and in the 6th and following verses the speaker is the Lord. But that this distinction, which has commonly been a great deal too much spoken of, is one of no moment, is evident from the fact, that vers. 6 and 7 are nothing else than a continuation of ver. 5, and from the conclusion, vers. 15 and 16, where the address of the Lord, and the address of the Psalmist, who speaks in the spirit of the Lord, are immediately linked together.

If we keep this in view, the formal arrangement of the Psalm becomes easy and simple. The Psalm falls into two main divisions, an objective and a subjective one, which are even externally separated from each other by a Selah, at the end of ver. 7. The first, ver. 1–7, is completed in seven verses. This, as usual, is divided into a three and a four. The second main division contains, in the first instance, only nine verses, and is divided by a five and a four. The defect of the conclusion, however, is, as in the case in Ps. lxxvii., compensated by the title. The arrangement, therefore, is exactly the same as that which obtains universally in Psalms which contain 17 verses.

According to the title, "*To the Chief Musician after the manner of Gath* (comp. at title of Ps. viii.) *by Asaph*," the Psalm was composed by Asaph. We shewed already, at Ps. lxxiv., that we must adhere to the Asaph who belonged to the age of David, in all the Psalms which bear this name, except in those cases in which the contents of the Psalm render this impossible. In the present instance this is not the case. "The contents," observes Köster, "are of a general character, and the freshness of tone indicates the great age of the Psalm." The verbal reasons which led Hitzig to assign it a very *late* date are of no consequence. He refers to the loose יְהוֹסֵף in ver. 5, and to the participle after לֹץ in ver. 13. But that the retention of the ךָ of the Hiph. (Ew. § 284), is not at all characteristic of the language of later times, is evident, among other passages,

from Ps. xlv. 17, and from 1 Sam. xxii. 47. These forms are throughout *poetical*, and are altogether independent of time. Poetry is fond of full and sonorous expressions. It can never be shewn that the position of the participle after לִי is characteristic of a later idiom; comp. 2 Sam. xviii. 12. In favour, however, of the Asaph of David's time, we have to urge the prophetic character which our Psalm bears in common with the other productions of this bard, the "seer," the prophet among the Psalmists, Ps. l., lxxiii., lxxviii. (even Hitzig believed that he heard in the warnings here the voice of the author of the seventy-eighth Psalm), and lxxxii. To this we may add the striking connection between ver. 8 here, and Ps. l. 7.

Ver. 1–3.—Ver. 1. *Sing aloud to God, who is our strength, make a joyful noise unto the God of Jacob.* Ver. 2. *Raise the song, and give the timbrel, the lovely guitar with the harp.* Ver. 3. *Blow in the month the horn, at the full moon, on the day of our feast.*—The exhortation to praise God with all the might depends for its significance, as the second part of the strophe shews, upon its pointing to the rich treasures of salvation which he has imparted to his people.—On "our strength," comp. as a commentary vers. 14, 15, and Ps. xlvi. 1. The Lord manifested himself as the strength of his people on their deliverance from Egypt.—In ver. 3 the instruments are introduced in regard to their tone: *timbrel* stands instead of *sound of the timbrel.* Against the exposition "bring hither the timbrels," it may be urged, that, according to the title and verse 2d, those addressed are called upon both to sing and to play.—In verse 3 *the month* is the first and the chief month of the year, the month in which the passover occurred: comp. Ex. xii. 1, 2: "And the Lord said to Moses and Aaron in the land of Egypt, This month shall be to you the *chief* of months, it shall be the *first* month of the year to you." "In the full moon" of the second clause defines exactly the time within the sacred month which belonged to the festival. The general and special descriptions are connected with each other exactly in the same way in Lev. xxiii. 5: "In the first month, on the 14th day of the month, is the passover to the Lord." In other passages throughout the law it is merely the general descriptions that occur; thus, Ex. xxxiv. 18: "The feast of unleavened bread shalt thou keep, seven days shalt thou

eat unleavened bread, at the time of the month Abib" (comp. on the passage the Beitr. iii. p. 361 ss. on Abib p. 364), Deut. xvi. 1: "Observe the month Abib, for in the month Abib the Lord thy God brought thee out of Egypt:" comp. on the passage the Beitr. p. 365. According to the common construction, חדש signifies the *new moon;* throughout the Pentateuch, however, it invariably signifies *a month;* and everywhere, even in the later scriptures, it retains this signification, with this difference, that sometimes the month stands for the festival peculiar to the month. And the following grounds are decisive the other way. 1. As it is undoubted that כסה signifies *full moon*, we have two festivals according to this view—a supposition very unlikely in itself, and the more so that no inward connection whatever is indicated between the *new moon* and the *full moon festival.* 2. The contents of the Psalm shew that it was composed exclusively for use at the passover. The festival for which it was set apart was, according to ver. 5, instituted at the departure from Egypt, and according to verses 6, 7, and 10, stands in immediate reference to this deliverance;—that the new moon of the month Abib was celebrated as a preparation for the passover is altogether an arbitrary assumption. 3. The *horn* (not at all the *trumpets* named in Num. x. 10) appears here only as one among many instruments, while the sound of drums for the new moons, and especially for the 7th of the month, was the peculiar and characteristic ceremony. Such an amount of musical power as is here desired was not suitable for this festival. 4. There is no doubt that our verse as supplementing the title fixes the character of the Psalm. This, however, it cannot do, if חדש signify the *new moon.* In this case, in consequence of the indefinite nature, "in the new moon," which demands explanation from what follows, we have our attention directed exclusively to "in the full moon;" and are thus left to waver in uncertainty, as the example of Gesenius shows, between the full moon of the passover and of the feast of tabernacles.[a]—The idea of those who, after the example of Luther *(in our festival of booths)*, understand the feast of tabernacles, is confuted by the preceding context. By this reference, it becomes

[a] It is clear from Prov. vii. 20, and also from the Syr. (See Gesen.), that כסה denotes in general the full moon, and not at all, as has been supposed, specially the feast of tabernacles.

altogether impossible to understand the Psalm. The expression "on the day of our feast" is also in favour of the passover. The passover, which celebrates the fundamental deed of God on behalf of his church, is *the* feast: comp. the Christol. ii. p. 565. Beitr. iii. p. 80. The feast of tabernacles never has this name, not even in 2 Chron. v. 3.—The correct interpretation of this verse is destructive of the position taken up by Venema, that the Psalm was composed for the celebration of the passover under Hezekiah; for this took place, according to 2 Chron. xxx. 2, contrary to the usual custom, in the *second* month. The account of this celebration, however, is so far of importance to ver. 1—3, as it shows that at that time music and singing formed a very important part of the celebration of the passover: comp. 2 Chron. xxx. 21, 22.

Ver. 4–7.—Ver. 4. *For it is a law for Israel, a right for the God of Jacob.* Ver. 5. *Such a commandment he gave to Joseph, when he brought him over Egypt land, where I heard a language unknown to me.* Ver. 6. *I removed from the burden his shoulder, his hands were set free from the burden-baskets.* Ver. 7. *In the distress thou didst call and I delivered thee. I heard thee in the thunder-cover. I proved thee at the waters of strife. Selah.*—In ver. 4, the law for Israel and the right for the God of Jacob correspond. God, by the deliverance which he has wrought out, has acquired a *right* to the thanks of Israel, and it is Israel's *duty*, by rendering obedience to the appointed law of the passover, to implement this right. Israel does not celebrate the passover at his own hand, he only pays to God what is his due,—a due demanded on the ground of mercies bestowed. It is this that distinguishes all festivals belonging to the true religion from those connected with religions that are false; the former depends throughout upon the foundation of a salvation imparted by God, and assumes the character of a right and a duty. The הוּא refers to the festivals in general. The individual expressions of festive joy spoken of in ver. 1–3 had not been expressly commanded in the law. They are, however, accidents which necessarily accompany the substance.—In ver. 5–7, the deed is more particularly described on which the right of God and the duty of Israel are founded. In reference to עדות *a testimony*, next a *law*, comp. at Ps. xix. 7, lxxviii. 5.

Joseph occupies the place of Israel here, because, during the whole period of the residence in the land of Egypt, the nation owed every thing to Joseph, "the crowned one among his brethren," Gen. xlix. 26; their whole existence there was founded on the services which Joseph had rendered to Egypt; comp. Ex. i. 8, according to which, the oppression of Israel arose from the new king, who did not know Joseph. It was only during this period of his existence that Israel could bear the name of Joseph; and it is altogether incorrect to generalize what is founded singly and entirely on the special circumstances connected with that period. The passage before us has assuredly nothing whatever to do with Ps. lxxvii. 15 and lxxx. i. The suffix in בצאתו refers to Joseph. "*Out* of Egypt" is the expression which commonly occurs in the Pentateuch; comp. Ex. xi. 41, "All the armies of the Lord went out from the land of Egypt," ver. 51, Num. xxii. 5, Deut. ix. 7; particularly in connection with the feast of the passover, comp. Ex. xxxiv. 18, "Thou shalt keep the feast of unleavened bread, seven days shalt thou eat unleavened bread as I have commanded thee at the time of the month Abib, for in the month Abib *thou wentest out of Egypt.*" Here, however, the expression is "*over* Egypt," *across*, על in the same sense in which it occurs in Job xxix. 7, "When I went out to the gate *over* or *across* the city." This *over* is more expressive than *out of*. The marching out appears all the more glorious, inasmuch as the marching extended over the whole country, across Egypt. Num. xxxiii. 4 supplies the commentary,—"The children of Israel went out with a high hand before all the Egyptians;" comp. Ex. xiv. 8.[a] Many expositors have suffered themselves to be led astray by the על. They translate: when he (the Lord) went forth against the land of Egypt, with reference to Ex. xi. 4, "About midnight I go out in the land of Egypt." Against this, however, we may urge, besides the manifest reference to the passage from the Pentateuch above referred to, the obviously corresponding expression "who led thee out of the land of Egypt," in ver. 11. There is next added very suitably, according to the first-mentioned rendering, "where I heard a language

[a] Calvin: The people, led on by God, traversed freely the whole land of Egypt, a passage having been afforded them in consequence of the broken and terrified state of the inhabitants.

unknown to me," an expression which denotes more exactly the oppressive nature of their previous condition, and the unspeakable benefit arising from their deliverance; comp. Ps. cxiv. 1, "When Israel went out of Egypt, the house of Jacob from the people of strange language." Finally, in the continuation in ver. 6 and 7, the language refers entirely to the deliverance out of Egypt, and not at all to the destruction of the first-born of the Egyptians, to which there is nowhere else one single reference throughout the whole Psalm. The last words of the verse indicate, as has been already observed, what it was that rendered the departure of the Israel so very desirable. To dwell in the midst of a people of strange language, to serve a people from whom they were inwardly in a state of utter estrangement, must have been very painful and oppressive. The subject is Israel represented by the Psalmist. We cannot translate, "a language of such a one whom," "but a language (of the kind that) I did not understand," "a language of unintelligibility for me;" comp. Böttcher, proben p. 51. Many expositors translate: the voice of one unknown to me (a God whom I till that time did not know) I heard then in Egypt, or I hear now, the oracle referred to in ver. 6–16. But a comparison of the parallel passages, Ps. cxiv. 1, which is particularly decisive, Deut. xxviii. 49, "The Lord will bring upon thee a people from afar, ... a people whose language thou dost not understand," Is. xxxiii. 19, and Ju. v. 15, leaves no doubt whatever as to the correctness of the interpretation given above. Farther, the description of the miserable condition in which Israel existed in the land of Egypt is continued in ver. 6 and 7. To *the unknown language* here, corresponds *the burden, the burden-basket* there; and to *the marching out* here *the rescuing, the delivering* there. Then the designation of Jehovah as one unknown, for the whole people, or for the individual to whom a revelation begins, is destitute of all real foundation and analogy. Finally, this translation, which proceeds from an entire misapprehension of the whole train of thought, must be rejected on etymological grounds. שִׁפְתָה never signifies a particular discourse, but a way of speaking, a language; comp. Böttcher.—As the difference in regard to the speaker (in ver. 6 and 7 it is the Lord that speaks, while previous to this the Psalmist, or Israel represented by him, had

spoken in the name and spirit of the Lord) is one merely of form, and as, in reality, verses 6 and 7 merely continue the train of thought of ver. 5 (when the Lord removed, or, then the Lord removed) it is altogether inappropriate, by marks of quotation, to favour the idea of the beginning of a new address. Such a change as to speakers requires very little attention to be paid to it, especially in the Psalm of Asaph, as they are of a highly poetical character. At the first clause of ver. 6, comp. Ex. vi. 6, 7, "I the Lord bring you out from under the burden of the Egyptians." The basket דוד is, according to the parallelism, the *burden-basket*. Baskets of this kind were found in the sepulchral vaults which have been opened in Thebes, of which Rosellini first furnished drawings and descriptions: the Israelites used them for carrying from one place to another the clay and manufactured bricks: comp. Egypt and the Books of Moses, p. 79, &c.[a]—On "I heard thee in the thunder-cover," in ver. 7, comp. Hab. iii. 4, "And there (in the lightning-flash which surrounds the Lord at his appearance) was the hiding of his power." As in that passage God is concealed in the lightning-flash (comp. Delitzsch), so is he here in the thunder, *i. e.*, the thunder-cloud, "the darkness," Ex. xx. 18, the storm. There is no need for assuming that the Psalmist alludes, specially and exclusively, to Ex. xiv. 24, according to which, while the Egyptians were passing through the sea, the Lord looked upon their chariots from the pillar of fire and cloud, and thus completed the deliverance of the Israelites. It is a common figure of poetry to represent the Lord as riding forth in a storm, mighty against his enemies, and on behalf of his people; comp. Ps. lxxvii. 16–18; Ps. xviii. 11:—and hence the Psalmist has assuredly before his eyes the whole series of Egyptian plagues. At the last clause, *I proved thee at the water of Meribah*, Luther says correctly: "he makes mention of the waters of strife in order that he may remind them of their sins." The words do not properly belong to the train of thought in the preceding context, which is occupied only with the salvation of God. They look in the first in-

a Calvin: "We may now apply the subject to ourselves: inasmuch as God has not only removed our shoulders from burdens of bricks, and our hands from kilns, but has redeemed us from the tyranny of Satan, and brought us up from perdition, we are laid under much more solemn obligations than were the ancient people."

stance very like the expression of an idea which had started up uncalled for. This apparently arbitrary reference to Israel's unfaithfulness and ingratitude prepares the way, however, for the following exhortation and complaint, and thus forms the connecting link between the first and second portions of the Psalm. The proving at the waters of strife, Ez. xvii. 1, &c. (comp. on the relation which this narrative bears to that at Num. xx. 1, &c., the Beitr. iii. p. 378, &c.) is specially referred to, because it was here that the first proper act of rebellion took place on the part of the people who had only a short while ago beheld the glorious deeds of the Lord—the first manifestation of his real nature. The *proving* comes into notice here in reference to the well known *result* by which it was followed.

Ver. 8–12.—Ver. 8. *Hear my people, and let me swear solemnly to thee, if thou harkenest unto me.* Ver. 9. *Let there not be among thee another God; and thou shalt not worship a God of the strangers.* Ver. 10. *I am the Lord thy God who have brought thee out of the land of Egypt: open thy mouth wide, I will fill it.* Ver. 11. *But my people does not listen to my voice, and Israel will not be mine.* Ver. 12. *So I have given them over to the wickedness of their heart, they walk in their own counsels.*—On ver. 8, comp. Ps. l. 7. On "my people," Luther says: "You are my people, I have preserved, nourished, and redeemed thee; therefore listen to me." As אִם is never a particle expressive of desire, it is necessary to supply: *it will be well with thee,* or something similar,—a construction rendered also probable by comparing ver. 13. Similar ellipses occur in Ex. xxxii. 32; Ps. xxvii. 17 (comp. at the passage), Luke xix. 42; xix. 9 (see Koenöhl on the passages).—Ver. 9 and 10 depend on Ex. xx. 2, 3. It has been very unjustifiably maintained that the first commandment stands instead of the whole decalogue. This would deprive the thought of all point. It was only their fathers' God, their country's God, that had manifested himself in the past as Israel's Redeemer (comp. Deut. xxxii. 12, "the Lord alone did lead him, and there was not with him one God of the stranger)," and thus he is still rich in help for them; therefore they should even now serve this one God only. —Ver. 10 is in reality connected with ver 9 by a "Because." The expression, "who led thee out of the land of Egypt" is literally

from Deut. xx. 1. The words, "Open thy mouth wide, I will fill it," are equivalent to "I am rich for all thy necessities, even for thy boldest wishes," as is evident from their development in ver. 14–16.—In ver. 11, 12, the Lord complains that Israel had hitherto, to their own loss, failed to respond to the exhortations addressed to them in ver. 8—10, notwithstanding the solid foundation on which these rested in their deliverance. Comp. Prov. i. 30, 31, "they would have none of my counsel, they despised all my censures: therefore they eat the fruit of their way and shall be satisfied with their own counsels." At ver. 11, Luther says: "It is something dreadful and terrible that he says *my* people Israel. If it had been a stranger to whom I had manifested no particular deeds of kindness, &c." Allusion is made to Deut. xiii. 9, where it is said, in reference to him who should entice Israel to serve strange Gods: "thou shalt not *consent* unto him nor *hearken* unto him." Israel had singularly and shamefully reversed the matter: they had lent their ear to the enticer and renounced their own God. The preterites denote the past stretching forward into the present.—At ver. 12, God lets every one take his own way; the stiff-necked Israelites who would not have his truth and goodness, shall be given over to error and wickedness, to their own destruction; comp. Rom. i. 24. 2 Thess. ii. 10, 11. The שרירות לב (not *hardness* but *wickedness* of heart) is here and everywhere else where it occurs, Is. iii. 17; vii. 24, taken from Deut. xxix. 19. *To walk in their own counsels* is to regulate the life according to them, according to the passions of their own corrupted hearts instead of the commandments of the holy God, comp. Jer. vii. 24; Is. lxv. 2: "a rebellious people who walk in a way that is not good, *after their own thoughts.*"

Ver. 13–16. Arnd.: "The blessed God in his great fatherly love and faithfulness cannot leave them, he must repeat his promise and call men again to him by the offer of his gracious deeds."—Ver. 13. *If now my people did hear me, and Israel walked in my way.* Ver. 14. *I would soon bring down their enemies and turn my hand upon their adversaries.* Ver. 15. *The haters of the Lord would feign submission to him, and their time would continue for ever.* Ver. 16. *He would feed them with the fat of the wheat, and out of the rock would I satisfy thee with honey.*

—The לוּ, ver. 13, denotes the condition notwithstanding the consciousness that it is not realized: if my people heard, which they do not: comp. Ewald, § 627. Is. xlviii. 18. *The ways of the Lord* form the contrast to their own stupid and ruinous plans, ver. 12.—The phrase "to turn the hand upon," ver. 14, is, when taken by itself, an indefinite one, to turn it to the object of trade or manufacture: comp. the Christol. ii. p. 338. Here, according to the connection, it is the *punishing* hand; and to turn it back denotes the speedy overpowering of the enemies,—as formerly in the days of old, ver. 6 and 7: comp. particularly there בִּצָּרָה.—The first half of ver. 15 depends on Deut. xxxiii. 29: "thy enemies shall feign to thee" (comp. at Ps. xviii. 44.) The allusion to this passage shews that the לוֹ is to be referred to Israel and accounts for the singular. On "the haters of the Lord," Luther: "Thou shouldst not think that I am favourable to them, for they are my enemies also. But they are too strong for thee and gain the upper hand because thou hast forsaken me. Had it not been for this, matters would have been very different. It is not the enemies that plague thee; it is I: mine hand it is that oppresses thee when thine enemies oppress thee." It was the design to give great prominence to the thought so comforting for Israel and so well fitted to lead them to reconciliation with God, that their enemies are also the enemies of God, which led to the expression, "the haters of the Lord," instead of "my haters." The use of the third person in the first clause of ver. 16 is connected with this. But towards the conclusion, the usual form is resumed. On the second clause, comp. 2 Sam. vii. 24. The עֵת signifies always *time*, never *fortune*.—On ver. 16, Luther: "For there are two things of which we stand in need, nourishment and protection. Therefore, God now says, that if they turn to him he will not only be their man of war to fight for them, but also their husbandman: so that those who fear him and trust in him shall want nothing that pertains to this life." The first clause is from Deut. xxxii. 14 (the *fat of the wheat* is instead of the *best of the wheat*), the second clause from Deut. xxxii. 13, "and he caused Israel to suck honey from the rock, oil from the flinty rock." That the honey from the rock is not at all what several very prosaicly have supposed, the honey which the bees had prepared in the crevices of the rocks, but something alto-

gether unusual and supernatural (*out of the hard barren rock*) is evident from the parallel clause in Deut., *oil from the flinty rock*, and also from the passage, Job. xxix. 6, which in like manner alludes to the passage in Deut.: "when I bathed my feet in milk and the hard rock was changed for me into streams of oil."

PSALM LXXXII.

God appears in the midst of his church for judgment upon the gods of the earth, the judges who bear his image, ver. 1, punishes them on account of their violation of justice, and exhorts them to a better conduct, ver. 2–4. Still they persevere in their want of understanding, in their walk in darkness, and every thing is in confusion, ver. 5. The definite sentence is therefore passed upon them, intimation of their *destruction* is made to them, ver. 6 and 7. In conclusion, the Psalmist expresses in ver. 8 his desire for the appearance of the Lord to judgment.

The formal arrangement is very simple. The main division is complete in seven, which is again divided into a four and a three, the preceding judgment, and the final decision. To the main division, which is throughout of a prophetical character, there is appended a lyrical conclusion, in which the Psalmist expresses his wish for that which he had already announced as just impending.

The question arises, whether the wicked rulers against whom the Psalm is directed are internal or external. The last view is the one generally entertained. The Psalm is considered as directed "against the potentates of Asia about the time of the captivity;" "the miserable, the poor," &c. are viewed as the Israelites. But the only argument in favour of this view depends upon a false interpretation of ver. 5 and 8; and there are numerous and decisive reasons in favour of the reference to internal relations. Just at the very beginning God appears for judgment in the "congregation of God," and there calls to account the wicked judges who must therefore belong to it. The name Elohim and sons of God which is given to them, is never used in the Old Testament of heathen magistrates. It presupposes the kingdom of God. When there is no king there can be no vice-

king. Besides, in ver. 6, in reference to this title of honour, allusion is made to expressions in the Pentateuch which are applied exclusively to Israelitish rulers. In reference to heathen rulers, it is matter of great difficulty that those in the Psalm are accused of nothing else than faulty administration of justice, partiality in favour of the wicked, the denial of the rights of the poor, and so on. The sins of the heathen judges lay entirely in another direction. And on the other hand, these very charges are brought forward in many passages against the Israelitish rulers, for example, Is. iii. 13–15, a passage nearly related to our Psalm, and which may serve as a commentary to it: "the Lord standeth up to plead, and the Lord standeth to judge the people: the Lord will enter into judgment with the ancients of his people and the princes thereof; for ye have eaten up the vineyard, the spoil of the poor is in your houses," Ch. i. 17–24. Mich. iii. 1–4. Jer. xxii. 1, &c. If we compare carefully these passages and likewise the passages in the Pentateuch in which the Israelitish rulers are told their duties, such as Deut. i. 17, and also the address of Jehosaphat to the rulers sent forth by him, it will not be possible with a good conscience to adopt the hypothesis of heathen rulers.

These passages, and also the fundamental passages of the Pentateuch, are decisive against those who would refer the Psalm exclusively, or only especially, to *kings*. It has to do with the judges of the people, and with kings, if at all, only in so far as they are judges. If the Psalm was composed in the time of David, in favour of which supposition may be pleaded the prophetic tone peculiar to the Asaph of that period, and against which no tenable ground can be advanced (even Hitzig must allow that there is no allusion of any kind, no late form or connecting particle, no term which could be pronounced as being decidedly of later origin to betray an author belonging to a later age), the Psalmist could not, in the first instance, assuredly have referred to the king,—a view which is confirmed by the express mention of "the princes," in ver. 7, as compared with "the ancients of his people and the princes thereof," in Is. iii. Still though the Psalm was in the first instance called forth by existing relations, yet being destined for all ages, it undoubtedly admits of being applied to kings in the discharge of their duty as

judges, in so far as they are guilty of that perversion of right here imputed to them : comp. Jos. xxii. 1, ss.

The following remarks are designed to lead to a deeper insight into the meaning of the Psalm. Nothing can be more ungrounded than the assertion which in modern times has been repeatedly made, that the God of the Old Testament is a being altogether strange or foreign to finite beings. The Old Testament opposes this view at its very opening, with its doctrine of the creation of man after the image of God. With this doctrine in its commencement, it cannot possibly teach in any other part that there is an absolute opposition between God and man. Besides, in the Law of Moses, all those whose office it is to command, to judge, and to arbitrate, all those to whom in any respect reverence and regard is due, are set apart as the representatives of God on earth. The foundation of this is found in the commandment, "honour thy father and mother," in the Decalogue. It was shewn in the Beitr. P. iii. p. 605, that this commandment belongs to the first table : thou shalt fear and honour God, first in himself, second in those who represent him on earth, and farther, that the parents are named in it only in an individualising manner, as representatives of all who are possessed of worth, and are worthy of esteem. The direction in Lev. xix. 32, rises on the foundation of this commandment, where respect for the *aged* appears as the immediate consequence of respect for God, whose eternity was designed to be revered and honoured under the emblem of their old age ; also Ex. xxii. 27, according to which we are taught to recognise in governors a reflection of the majesty of God : "thou shalt not revile God, nor curse the ruler of thy people," *i. e.*, thou shalt not curse thy rulers (or in any one way dishonour him), for he bears the image of God, and every insult offered to such a representative of God in his kingdom is an insult against God, in him God himself is honoured and revered : comp. 1 Chron. xxix. 23, "and Solomon sat upon the throne of Jehovah." But it was in connection with the office of judge that the stamp of divinity was most conspicuous, inasmuch as that office led the people under the foreground of an humble earthly tribunal to contemplate the background of a lofty divine judgment : "the judgment is God's," Deut. i. 17, whoever comes before it, comes before God, Ex. xxi. 6 ; xxii. 7, 8.

The position assigned to the office of judge must, when properly considered, have exerted a practical influence of a twofold character. It must have filled those who were brought before its tribunal with a sacred reverence for an authority which maintained its right upon earth in the name of God. And on the part of the judges themselves it must have led them to take a lofty view of their calling, it must have called forth earnest efforts to practise the virtues of him whose place they occupied, him "who does not favour princes, and makes no distinction between rich and poor, for they are the work of his hands," Job xxxiv. 19, and it must have awakened a holy fear of becoming liable to his judgment. For there could be no doubt that as they judged in God's stead, the heavenly Judge would not suffer them to go unpunished should they misuse their office, but would in that case come forth from his place and utter his thundering cry, "how long!". This last idea is expressly brought forward in the law. In Deut. i. 17, solemn admonitions are addressed to judges, grounded on the lofty position assigned to their office. Comp. 2 Chron. xix. 6, 7, where Jehosaphat, with greater copiousness of detail, addresses the following admonitions to the judges, whom he commissioned: "Take heed what ye do, for ye judge not for man but for God, who is with you in the judgment: wherefore now let the fear of the Lord be upon you, take heed and do it, for there is no iniquity with the Lord our God, nor respect of persons, nor taking of gifts."

The Psalm has no reference to the depth of human sinfulness except in so far as the judges lost sight of the above view, set before their minds rather the rights than the duties of their exalted station, and abused for the gratification of their pride what should have produced in them fear and trembling. The name Elohim, which should have continually reminded them of their heavenly Judge, served them as a shield for their own unrighteousness. They held it up in the face of all complaints and objections. Every man who did not go in with their unrighteousness, they branded as a rebel against God. The Psalmist raises his protest against this melancholy perversity. He shows the wicked judges what it was that they really had to do with the title Elohim. Asaph *the seer* lets them see, what the eye of

flesh did not see, God, God among the gods, and brings him out to their dismay from his place of concealment.

There is a deviation so far from the language of the law of Moses, that there the name Elohim is applied only in general to the bench of judges as representing God, and here in the expression, "in the midst of the gods he judges," it is applied to individual judges. This difference, however, which has frequently been misused in favour of completely untenable expositions, is so far from being of any importance, that even in the Pentateuch an individual person, although not a judge, if representing God, is dignified with the name Elohim. Moses, in Ex. iv. 16, as the representative of God for Aaron, is called his god; and in like manner a god to Pharaoh, ch. vii. 1: comp. Baumgarten on the passages.

Luther, after giving a picture of the wickedness and profligacy of the great men of his time, remarks: "There existed also among the Jewish people youths of this character, who kept continually in their mouths the saying of Moses in Ex. xxii. 9. They employed this saying as a cloak and shield for their wickedness, against the preachers and the prophets; and gave themselves great airs while they said: wilt thou punish us and instruct us? Dost thou not know that Moses calls us Gods? Thou art a rebel, thou speakest against the ordinance of God, thou preachest to the detriment of our honour. Now the prophet acknowledges and does not deny that they are gods, he will not be rebellious, or weaken their honour or authority, like the disobedient and rebellious people, or like the mad saints who make heretics and enthusiasts, but he draws a proper distinction between their power and the power of God. He allows that they are gods over men, but not over God himself. It is as if he said: It is true you are gods over us all, but not over him who is the God of us all. From this we see in what a high and glorious position God intends to maintain the office of the magistracy. For who will set himself against those on whom God bestows his own name? Whoever despises them, despises at the same time the true Magistrate, God, who speaks and judges in them and through them, and calls their judgment his judgment. The Apostle Paul, Rom. xiii. 2, points out the consequences of this; and experience amply confirms his statement. But again, just as on the one hand he restrains the discontent of the populace, and brings

them on account of it under the sword and under law, so does he on the other hand restrain the magistracy, that it shall not abuse such majesty and power for wickedness, but employ it in the promotion and maintenance of peace. But yet only so far, that he will not permit the people to lift up their arm against it, or to seize the sword for the purpose of punishing and judging it. No, that they shall not do; God has not commanded it. He himself, God, will punish wicked magistrates, he will be judge and master over them, he will get at them, better than any one else could, as he has done from the beginning of the world."

Ver. 1-4.—Ver. 1. *A Psalm of Asaph. God stands in the congregation of God, in the midst of the gods he judges.* Ver. 2. "*How long will ye judge unjustly, and accept the persons of the wicked? Selah.* Ver. 3. *Judge the poor and the fatherless, give their rights to the poor and needy.* Ver. 4. *Deliver the poor and the needy, rid them out of the hand of the wicked.*"—The fiftieth Psalm, which was also composed by Asaph, begins, like the one now before us, with an appearance of God for judgment. The name *Elohim*, not *Jehovah*, designedly occurs in the first clause of ver. 1, because the judges also had been designated by this name: *God judges the gods.* The נִצָּב is, "he is placed," "he comes forward," as in Is. iii. 13. The sphere of the judging is described in general terms in the first clause, and is more particularly defined in the second. The general description refers to the ground of this special judging act on the part of God: because Israel is his people, among whom he can suffer no unrighteousness, no abuse of an office which bears his name, he must judge his degenerate office-bearers.[a] עֲדַת יְהוָה, the congregation, of Jehovah, עֲדַת יִשְׂרָאֵל the congregation of Israel (for example Ps. lxxiv. 2), הָעֵדָה, the congregation, are standing expressions for the people of God. The Psalmist places אֵל instead of the Jehovah of the first expression, for the sake of the allusion to the second, and also because אֵל is more allied to אֱלֹהִים. Several deny the reference to Israel, and translate

[a] Luther: *He stands in his congregation*, for the congregation is his own. This is a terrible word of threatening against these wicked gods or magistrates. For they must here understand that they are not placed over stocks and stones, nor over swine and dogs, but over the congregation of God: they must therefore be afraid of acting against God himself when they act unjustly.

either: in the assembly of God, the assembly which God appoints, or that over which he presides, or: in the divine college of judges. But עדה never signifies an assembly or a college, but always a community, a congregation. By *Elohim* several would understand the sons of God, the angels: God holds a judgment (upon the judges) in the midst of his heavenly court. But in this way the fundamental thought of the Psalm which seems placed at its head in marked antithetic expressions, *God judges the Gods*, is destroyed; Elohim is never used for angels, (comp. at Ps. viii. 5, Gesen. on the word), and there is no reason why it should be so used here, the same appellation applied to God and to the angels manifestly leading to confusion; it is impossible to tell in this case who is judged, or to whom the address in ver. 4–6 is directed; and finally, ver. 6, where the judges are called gods, cannot possibly be separated from the words "in the midst of the gods." The *judging* refers, in the first instance, to the sharp accusation of ver. 2–4. Still in these cases where this is not attended to,[a] it is completed in the definite sentence of death contained in ver. 6 and 7.—Ver. 2 depends on Lev. xix. 15: Ye shall do no unrighteousness in judgment, thou shalt not respect the person of the poor, nor honour the person of the mighty, but in righteousness shalt thou judge thy neighbour: comp. Deut. i. 17: Ye shall not respect persons in judgment. The עַל stands here in some measure as an adverb, exactly as מישרים in Ps. lviii. 1: comp. at the passage. Gesenius in his Thesaurus has proved, in a thorough discussion which in fact exhausts the subject, that the phrase נשא פנים signifies, not "*to lift up* the face of any one," "to make him lift it up," but "to regard the face of any one," "to respect his person," "to be inclined towards him," "to favour him." The *Selah* standing here, as in Ps. iv. 4, between the prohibition and the command, leaves time to lay the first to heart.—The *judging* in ver. 3 denotes the opposite of not taking up their case, of sending them away unheard: comp. Is. i. 17: judge the fatherless, plead for the widow. *The poor*,—comp. Ex. xxiii. 3. *The fatherless*,—comp. Ex. xxii. 21. Luther: "Every prince should

[a] Mich.: Such is the great benignity and patience of the supreme Judge, that before pronouncing sentence he addresses to the criminals before his bar a serious admonition, with a view of bringing them, if possible, to a sound state of mind.

get these three verses, yea the whole Psalm, painted upon the walls of his room, upon his bed, over his table, and even upon his clothes. For here they will find what high, princely, noble virtue their situation demands; so that assuredly worldly supremacy, next to the office of the ministry, is the highest service of God, and the most profitable duty upon earth."

Ver. 5–7.—Ver. 5. *They know not and understand not, in darkness they walk on, all the foundations of the earth are shaken.* Ver. 6. *I have said: Ye are gods and sons of the Most High all of you.* Ver. 7. *But ye shall die like men, and fall like one of the princes.*—At ver. 5 we must supply: "as they have hitherto done; the divine reprehension and punishment have produced no good effects." As God continues to speak in ver. 6 and 7, we must conceive of this complaint in regard to the inefficacy of what he had hitherto announced, as proceeding from him. At "they know not and understand not," we are to supply the object from the context, as in all similar cases (comp. at Ps. xiv. 3), viz., *the sacred duties of their office*, which had been inculcated upon them in ver. 2–4. Comp. Mich. iii. 1. "Is it for you to know *judgment*?" The *darkness* indicates moral bewilderment, comp. Prov. ii. 13: "They forsake the ways of *uprightness*, and walk in the ways of darkness." At the last clause we are by no means to supply *therefore:* the clause stands in the same relation as the other clauses to the *criminality* of the judges: every thing is ruined by them,—they ruin every thing. There is an implied comparison: every thing in the land is tossed upside down as in an earthquake. It is only in the comparison, and not in the reality, that the reference to the earth lies.—In the final judgment pronounced by God, ver. 6 and 7, the elevated station of judges is first acknowledged, on which they grounded their assertion that they were invested with absolute power, ver. 4, and then it is affirmed that this station by no means frees them from responsibility, or affords them any protection against that merited punishment which was just about immediately to befal them. The *but* in ver. 7 supposes an *indeed* understood in ver. 6.[a] *I have said* refers to cer-

[a] Calvin: A concession in which the prophet shews the wicked judges, that they will derive no protection from that sacred character with which God has invested them. I acknowledge that you are God, &c.

tain generally well-known expressions in which the magistracy, and in particular the judicial office, is designated by the name Elohim,—the passages already quoted of the Mosaic law. The *Elohim* might here in itself be taken in the singular: ye are God, bearers of his image, as Gousset and others expound. But ver. 1 renders it necessary to translate: *ye are gods.* Our Saviour interprets the passage in this way in Jo. x. 35. Along with the fundamental passages to which it refers, and on which it certainly forms an advance, in so far as the name Elohim is applied to individuals, the passage before us is strikingly adapted to give a blow to that rigid dualism of God and man, in which the Pharasaic opposition to the God-man is rooted. The second appellation, "Sons of the Highest," indicates the intimate character of the relation in which earthly judges stand to the Judge in heaven. It was shewn at Ps. ii. 7, that it is in this sense that the sonship of God is spoken of every where throughout the Old Testament. Luther: "It may well make one wonder that he calls such wicked individuals as those whom he here rebukes so sharply, by the name of sons of God or sons of the Highest, since children of God is an appellation which in Scripture is applied to holy believers. Answer: it is just as great a wonder that he should bestow upon such wicked people his own name; yea, it is rather a greater wonder that he should call them gods. But it all lies in the word: I have said.' For we have often remarked that the word of God sanctifies and deifies all things to which it is applied. Wherefore we may call such situations as have had impressed upon them the word of God, in every respect holy divine conditions, although the persons are not holy. Just as father, mother, preacher, minister, &c., are in every respect holy divine situations, although the persons who are in them may be knaves and rogues. Thus inasmuch as God stamps the office of magistry with his word, magistrates are correctly called gods, and the children of God, on account of their divine condition, and the word of God, although they are really vile knaves, as he complains that they are."—The 7th verse does not at all refer in general to mortality and death—a reference which acquired proper force and significance only in New Testament times, when "and after that the judgment," was brought clearly out as standing in immediate connection. The idea meant to be conveyed is, in accordance with

the Old Testament practice throughout, and especially that of the Psalms in similar cases, a threatening of violent death, of a cutting off in the midst of the days: comp. the heathen saying: ad generum Cereris sine caede et sanguine pauci descendunt reges et sicca morte tyranni. This is evident from "ye shall *fall*" of the second clause (נפל is always used of a *violent* death, Ps. xci. 7; Ex. xix. 21; Jer. viii. 12, and in the full form, "to fall *by the sword*," in Jer. xxxix. 18, and in other passages), by which the general expression of the first clause, "ye shall die," which is accompanied only by the words "like men," is rendered definite. The expression, "like men," "after the manner of men" (comp. at Ps. xvii.), intimates to the gods of the earth, who fancied themselves to be above all other men, that as far as death is concerned, they are subject to the general lot of humanity. The expression, "as one of the princes" (comp. 1 Kings xxii. 13; xix. 2. Obed. ver. 11), reminds them of the numerous examples in early times of similar dignitaries who were removed by the judgment of God. The connection shews that it is *fallen* princes that are meant. Any further reference (several expositors suppose that *heathen* princes are meant, who are not even once particularly alluded to, others *warriors*,—not to speak of still more arbitrary ideas) is altogether unknown to the context, is in no respect called for, and indeed is of no use whatever.

The prophetic denunciation of the judgment of God is followed, in ver. 8, by an expression of earnest desire for its accomplishment.—*Lift up thyself, O God, judge the earth, for thou art Lord over all the nations.*—The wish of the Psalmist, or of the church, in whose name he speaks, refers, in the first instance, to Israel; yet, as the special exercise of judgment on the part of God is only an instance of what is general, the Psalmist calls upon him to appear to judge the world: comp. at Ps. vii. 7, 8; lvi. 7; lix. 5. The Lord appears also, in the parallel passage, Is. iii. 13, to judge the *nations*. The call made upon God to judge the earth is based upon the fact, that all its nations are subject to him, and responsible to him, no less than Israel, the peculiar נחלה of the Lord, and, therefore, the *immediate* object of his judgment. נחל with the accusative is, "to possess," and with ב "to have a possession:" comp. Num. xviii. 20; Deut. xix. 14; Num. xxxiv. 29. (Böttcher is wrong, Proben. p. 184.)

PSALM LXXXIII.

The short prayer that God would help, ver. 1, is followed, in ver. 2–8, by a representation of the trouble which occasions the prayer: first, in ver. 2–4, the *doings* of the enemies,—they roar, they take crafty counsel, they aim at nothing less than the entire destruction of Israel—second, their *number*, in ver. 5–8,—no fewer than ten nations assembled around Ammon and Moab as the centre-point, are united against Israel. The representation of the distress is followed, in ver. 9–18, by *the developed prayer*. This prayer first reminds God of the wonderful assistance which, in similar circumstances, he had vouchsafed to his people in the days of old, ver. 9–12; next it calls upon him to let loose the storm and the tempest of his wrath upon the enemies, ver. 13–15, and finally, by the destruction of the enemies, to promote his own glory upon the earth, ver. 16–18.

The formal arrangement admits of being ascertained with ease and certainty. If we cut off the title and the preliminary prayer in ver. 1 which in reality belongs to it, we have two main divisions, which are also externally separated by the Selah, viz., the representation of the trouble, ver. 2–8, and the prayer, ver. 9–16. The seven of the first is divided into a three and a four, the quality of the enemies, and their quantity; the ten of the second by a seven, which again falls into a four and a three (the reversed relation of the three and the four of the first half) and a three. The ten hostile nations, in ver. 5–7, correspond to the number ten of the verses of the second half: there are as many verses of petitions as there are enemies; while the number of individual petitions of this half is complete in twelve, the signature of the people of the covenant. This number ten of the nations is divided exactly in the same way as the verses: 4, 3, 3. In like manner, the number seven of the names of the enemies of the times of old, who were annihilated by the omnipotence of God, at the beginning of the second part, ver. 9–11, corresponds to the number seven of the verses of the first half, which speaks of the rage and the crowd of the enemies. Accident here cannot possibly exist.

There is no room for doubt as to the historical occasion of the

Psalm. It refers to the war of Jehosaphat against the allied Edomites, Moabites, Ammonites, and other nations, and forms the earliest as to subject of a series of cognate Psalms. While it makes mention of the help of God *in the midst of danger*, the forty-seventh Psalm was sung, after the discomfiture of the enemy, *on the field of battle*, and the forty-eighth at the thanksgiving service *in the temple*. The following reasons may be urged in favour of this view—a view which has been taken by all commentators, except those who have been prevented from arriving at the truth by some prejudice, such as that all the Psalms of Asaph were composed in David's time, or that the narrative at 2 Chron. xx. is not historically correct. 1. Here, as on that occasion, it is the same nations, upon the whole, that meet us. The Edomites, the Moabites, and the Ammonites, whom alone the author of Chronicles expressly names, are not only mentioned in this Psalm, but are also introduced as those with whom the whole enterprise originated. The others are grouped around these three; and at the conclusion, the sons of Lot are expressly named as the instigators. Even the narrative in Chronicles decidedly indicated that these three were named merely as the *centre* of the undertaking, and that there were others concerned of less note, the mention of whom was not a matter of such consequence to the *historian* as it was to the Psalmist whose object was promoted by a heaping up of names. Not to mention that, according to Chronicles, the enemy formed such a mass that Israel had no strength to resist them, that the quantity of plunder indicated an enemy from a far country, who had set out, bag and baggage, it is expressly said, in ver. 1, "and with them others who dwelt remote from the Ammonites, beyond them," (comp. on מהעמונים *Cler.* and the annot.), and in ver. 2, "and they told Jehosaphat saying, There cometh a great multitude against thee from beyond the sea, beyond Aram" (not *out of* Aram, for there is no copula), out of the country east of that stripe which is bounded on the north by Syria, and on the south by the Dead Sea, therefore, from the deserts of Arabia, whose hordes had in former times made Palestine the object of their marauding assaults. 2. The *union* and *confederacy* of all the nations mentioned, ver. 3 and 5, is of great consequence. Such a confederacy of nations took place only at one period during the whole history, viz., in the time of Jehosa-

phat. The remark of Koester, who finds it necessary to consider the confederacy of the nations as not a historical event, "they plunder us as if they had preconcerted a plan," shows to what arbitrary expedient those are obliged to have recourse who do not adopt the reference to this transaction. 3. According to ver. 4, the enemies kept their plans secret, and employed cunning preparatory to force. It is exactly in accordance with this, that, from 2 Chron. xx. 2, it appears that Jehosaphat obtained intelligence of the undertaking of his enemies for the first time, when they were already within his dominions, at Engedi: they could not possibly have made their hostile preparations with greater cunning and silence. The place, also, at which the enemies made their entrance, leads to the same result. Their marching southward so as to go round the Dead Sea, while they might have quietly entered Canaan from the east, as Israel did in former times, could only have been adopted for the purpose of concealing their object. 5. According to ver. 4 and 12, the enemies had nothing less for their object than to do to Israel what Israel had formerly done to the Canaanites. It was no ordinary marauding expedition;—the intention was completely to root out Israel, and to take entire possession of his lands. The enemies of Jehosaphat, according to 2 Chron. xx. 11, had the same object in view. That they had so is obvious from the quality of the booty which was found in their tents. They had set out, as Israel did of old, with bag and baggage. 5. The mention of the *Amalekites* among the enemies of Israel, in ver. 7, renders it impossible to come down to times later than that of Jehosaphat. The last remains of the Amalekites were, according to 1 Chron. iv. 43, rooted out by the Simeonites, under Hezekiah. From that time, they disappear altogether from history. Ewald's assertion that Amalek stands here "only as a name of infamy applied to parties well-known at the time," is to be considered as a miserable shift. 6. The Psalm must have been composed previous to the extension of the empire of the Assyrians over Western Asia. For the Assyrians named last, in the 8th verse, appear here in the very extraordinary character of an ally of the Sons of Lot. 7. Our Psalm, according to the title, was composed by Asaph. In accordance with this, we read, in 1 Chron. xx. 14, that the Spirit of the Lord came upon Jehasiel, of the sons of Asaph, in the

midst of the assembly. This Jehasiel is probably the author of the Psalm. 8. Our Psalm is a true picture of the state of feeling which prevailed throughout the people during the danger under Jehosaphat. According to the history of Chronicles, they praised God at that time, in the midst of their danger, with loud voice, ver. 19; and here in the title, which is an appendage to that of Ps. xlviii., the Psalm is called a *song of praise* (comp. on שִׁיר at Ps. xlii. 9); and it is such in reality, although it bears the form of a *prayer*,—a song of triumph sung before the victory,—no contest, no doubt, the distress is simply committed to God.

In establishing the *correct* view, we, at the same time, virtually refute those of an erroneous nature, whose very existence, as well as that of the prejudice against the historical character of 2 Chron. xx.—a notion which even our Psalm, in common with Ps. xlvii. and xlviii. (comp. Keil on 2 Chron. p. 241 ss.) is sufficient to put to shame,—is to be accounted for by the extent to which the abettors of the late origin of the Psalms have overshot their mark. The hypothesis that the Psalm refers to the occurrence at Neh. iv. 1 ss. is negatived by this, among other reasons, that it is scarcely possible to conceive anything less suitable to it than these "railleries of the neighbours," who had no further end in view than to hinder the building of the temple; and still further by the consideration that the *Samaritans*, who were at that time the *chief enemies*, would not have been wanting, and that the Amalekites and the Assyrians would not have been mentioned. That the *Persians* are meant by the Assyrians is again a miserable subterfuge. In a case where nine nations are spoken of by their proper names, the tenth must be referred to in the same way: that the Persians took any part in that machination is a groundless assertion; even had they done so, they would not have occupied such a subordinate place as is here assigned to the Assyrians.—The assertion first made by v. Til, and subsequently repeated by Hitzig, that the Psalm refers to the incidents of 1 Macc. v. is negatived by the following considerations:—At that time, there was no combination among the neighbouring nations; each acted by itself: these nations at that time did not set out for the purpose of extirpating the Jews *generally*; they only rose up against those who were dwelling in

the midst of them: there is no passage where the Syrians are designated by the name of Assyrians; they never were, like the Chaldeans and the Persians, the successors of the Assyrians in the dominion of Asia: the Syrians took no part in that conflict: the mention of Endor as the place of the discomfiture of the Canaanites, at ver. 10, shows that the Psalm must have been composed at a time when, in reference to the period of the Judges, there were other sources of information at hand than those which now exist. It is, therefore, not at all necessary to have recourse to those general grounds which are conclusive against the existence of Maccabean Psalms. The incidents, however, recorded in Neh. iv. and 1 Macc. v. are of importance so far, that they show how intense and permanent was the hatred of the neighbouring nations against "the people of God," and, consequently, go far to confirm the credibility of 2 Chron. xx., and the historical character of ver. 2–8 of our Psalm.

Amyraldus: "The Psalm may be applied now to the enemies of the Christian Church, of which Israel was the type. The most important and formidable of these are assuredly *sin* and *Satan*, from whom we most especially long to be delivered."

Title: *A Song of praise, a Psalm of Asaph.* Ver. 1. *O God, keep not silence, be not dumb, and be not still, O God.*—That דמי signifies not *rest*, but *silence*, is evident from "thine enemies make a *noise*," in ver. 2, and from the following word, תחרישׁ: comp. at Ps. xxviii. 1. The word also signifies *to be silent*, in Is. lxii. 7, as is evident from the 6th verse.

Ver. 2–4.—Ver. 2. *For lo, thine enemies make a noise, and those who hate thee lift up the head.* Ver. 3. *They make cunning plots against thy people, and consult against thy concealed ones.* Ver. 4. *They say: come let us root them out, so that they shall not be a people, and that mention be no more made of the name of Israel.*—On ver. 2. Calvin: "It is to be remarked that those who attack the church are called enemies of God, and it is no ordinary ground of confidence to have enemies in common with God." *They lift up the head,*—proudly, boldly, confidently; comp. Judges viii. 28, "And Midian was *humbled* by the children of Israel, and did not any more lift up its head." —In the first clause of ver. 3, the translation generally given is: they make artfully the plots in the councils. But as הערים in

other passages means to *act* cunningly, and סוד does not exactly indicate counsel or deliberation, it is better to consider סוד as standing in the accusative, just as לב does in ver. 5, and שמך in ver. 18, comp. Ew. § 483: in reference to confidence comp. at Ps. lxiv. 2, confidential intercourse which they carry on. The expression, "the hidden ones of God," instead of "those under his protection," is explained by Ps. xxvii. 5; xxxi. 21.—On ver. 4, Calvin: "it is as if they had formed the daring purpose of annulling the decree of God in which the eternal existence of the church lies founded." The מגוי is *away from a people,—so that they shall be no more a people:* comp. Jer. xlviii. 2; Is. vii. 8.—There are five terms employed in these three verses, descriptive of the doings of the enemies. The number five as the signature of the half, of something unfinished, points to the second half strophe, which is occupied with enumerating the enemies.

Ver. 5–8.—Ver. 5. *For they have consulted from the heart together, they have formed a covenant against thee.* Ver. 6. *The tents of Edom and of the Ishmaelites, Moab and the Hagarites.* Ver. 7. *Gebal, and Ammon, and Amalek; Philistia with the inhabitants of Tyre.* Ver. 8. *Even Assyria has joined them; they stretch out their arm to the Sons of Lot. Selah.* Calvin: "It is not a little profitable for us to see in this case, as in a glass, what, from the beginning, has been the experience of the Church of God, so that we need not be frightened too much when the whole world is against us. When we see that nothing new befals us, we are strengthened in patience by the example of the church of old, until God suddenly put forth his power, which alone is sufficient to subvert all the machinations of the world." Several expositors erroneously connect the 5th verse with what goes before—a flat and insipid rendering. The כי indicates a more full exhibition of the relations alluded to in the preceding verses; and it is not co-ordinate with the כי in ver. 2. The לב stands like the סוד in ver. 3, and the שמך in ver. 18, in the accusative. The expression "with the heart" supplies a commentary to Ps. lxiv. 5, 6, and denotes the earnestness and zeal of their plans; the heart, with the whole fulness of its purposes, plans, and wickedness, is engaged in the matter. Several expositors refer erroneously to לב אחד *with one heart*, in 1 Chron. xii.

38.—In enumerating the nations, the first seven are grouped together in such a manner that we find associated with the ring-leaders, who are Edom, Moab, and Ammon, those nations who had been pressed into the service by them,—so that these three names should be looked upon as if printed in large characters. That the arrangement is to be explained in this way is evident from the otherwise inexplicable separation of Moab from Ammon. As the Edomites were not a wandering but a settled people, we must either understand by "tents" camp-tents, or "tents" is to be considered as a poetical expression for habitations, founded on the dwelling of the Israelites in the wilderness: comp. Jud. vii. 8; 1 Kings xii. 16. The Edomites, who are associated with the Ishmaelites, dwelt, according to Gen. xxv. 18, next to the Assyrians, and therefore, in the *desert* of Arabia. The attendants of Moab, the Hagarites, were a wandering Arabic tribe, to the east of Jordan, which, in the time of Saul, was dispossessed of its country by the tribe of Reuben: comp. 1 Chron. v. 10, 19–22. They removed, in all probability, farther south, into that part of Arabia which adjoins Moab; and they were, therefore, their natural allies in this league. On the right side of Ammon there was Gebal, in all probability an Idumean district, and on the left, Amalek, who appears here, as on a former occasion, Judges iii. 13, in a state of alliance with him: "and he (Eglon, the king of Moab) assembled around him the sons of Ammon and Amalek." —To the seven nations, who formed the main body, there are added other three. First, the Philistines, who are not, indeed, expressly named in Chronicles, but concerning whom it is taken for granted, that those who always embraced the opportunity of a war raised against the Israelites by other nations, would not lose this opportunity of gratifying their deep-seated hatred. The inhabitants of Tyre appear only as following in the train of the Philistines. The merchants were induced merely by cupidity to join in this movement, as the tradesmen of Tarsus did in Ez. xxxviii. 13. They are universally to be found wherever there is any thing to be earned. In Amos, also, i. 6–10, the Philistines and the Tyrians appear in compact with each other, and with the Edomites, in their purposes of hostility towards the Israelites; and the passage in Joel iv. 4, &c., shows how natural is this addition of the Tyrians to the Philistines, where we find it repre-

sented in prophetic vision that the Philistines, along with the Tyrians and Sidonians, avail themselves of the opportunity of a war raised against Israel by other nations to gratify their hatred and their cupidity.—The *Assyrians* are mentioned *last*, being at the greatest distance, and engaged only indirectly and partially in the enterprise. According to Gen. xxv. 18, they were the neighbours of the Arabian sons of the desert, yea, according to Gen xxv. 3, they had Arabic elements in the midst of themselves, so that it is, therefore, antecedently probable that they should be found taking part in this great movement of the Arabic tribes. The Assyrians finally, as the associates from the most remote east, stand opposed to the Philistines and the Tyrians from the west. The seven wicked nations are bounded by these on the east and the west. Last of all, the sons of Lot are mentioned as the proper instigators and fire-brands of the war. The subject in "they stretch" is not the singular Assyrian, but all the nations which had been named, with the self-evident exception of the sons of Lot themselves. It is only by adopting this view, which, indeed, is the most obvious one, as far as the language is concerned, that this conclusion receives its proper significance.[a]

Ver. 9–12.—Ver. 9. *Do to them as to Midian, as to Sisera, as to Jabin, in the valley of Kison.* Ver. 10. *Who were destroyed at Endor, they were dung for the land.* Ver. 11. *Make them, their nobles, as Oreb and as Seeb, all their princes as Sebah and Zalmuna.* Ver. 12. *Who said: we will possess ourselves of the habitations of God.*—Calvin: "The substance is, may God who has so often smitten his enemies, and delivered his timorous sheep out of the jaws of wolves, not leave them at this time unprotected against these forces." From the many examples of divine judgment upon the enemies, which constituted pledges of deliverance in this trouble, the Psalmist selects *two*, the victory over the Canaanites from Judges iv. and v., and the victory of Gideon over the Midianites from Judges vii. and viii. He begins with the latter as the more glorious of the two. But in expanding the general subject of the 9th verse, in ver. 10 and 11, the order is reversed. Ver. 10 is an appendage to the second clause; ver. 11 expands the first. "Do to them as to Midian"

[a] Venema: Finally, having enumerated the nations in order, the Psalmist adds who were the authors of the war and who allies.

(instead of "as thou didst to Midian,"—the comparison being, as is frequently the case, merely referred to, not drawn out, comp. Ew. § 527) was fulfilled beyond what they asked or thought: the discomfiture of the enemies, as was the case with the Midianites, took place by mutual destruction,—a means which has often proved of signal service to the kingdom of God: comp. 2 Chron. xx. 22, 23, with Judges vii. 22. The glorious victory over Midian appears also in Is. ix. 4, and Hab. iii. 7, as the emblem and pledge of glorious deliverances yet to come. The effort to exhibit the individuals named, standing as much apart as possible, "as Sisera, *as* Jabin," not "*and* Jabin," is explained by the reference to the seven nations. On "in the valley of Kison," comp. Judges iv. 7, 13; v. 21.—Endor in ver. 10 (comp. Robinson, vol. iii. 468. 77), which appears here as the proper place of the discomfiture of the Canaanites, is not expressly named in the book of Judges. In the second clause there is an abbreviated comparison, as is obvious from the other passages where this same comparison occurs, drawn out, for example, 2 Kings ix. 37, "and the carcase of Jezebel shall be *as* dung upon the face of the field," Jer. ix. 21. Is. v. 25.—The "*their nobles*" in ver. 11, is expository of "*them.*" Oreb and Seeb were, according to Judges vii. 25, the *commanders* of the Midianites, Sebah and Zalmunah, Judges viii. 5–10; xii. 18–21, their *kings*.—Ver. 12 points once more to the guilt of the enemies which made them worthy of a destruction similar to that which befel those of an earlier period. Elohim (not Jehovah) is selected for the purpose of making more distinct the criminality of the attempt. By the "habitations of God" is meant the whole land of Canaan: comp. 2 Chron. xx. 11, "they have come to cast us out of thy possession which thou hast given us to inherit," Ps. xlvii. 4.

Ver. 13–15.—Ver. 13. *My God, make them like the whirl, like the stubble before the wind.* Ver. 14. *As fire which burns up the forest, as flame which scorches the hills:* Ver. 15. *Do thou thus pursue them with thy tempest, and terrify them with thy storm.*[a]—The "like the whirl (comp. at Ps. lxxvii.

[a] Venema: Having placed before our eyes the judgment of God upon the enemies, as illustrated by the example of antiquity, he now describes it in a sublimer style, with images drawn from wind, storm, and fire, and (ver 16–18) exhibits the scope and effect of these judgments, in order that men, overwhelmed with shame, may learn to reverence the majesty of Jehovah.

18), like the stubble," in ver. 13, is equivalent to "like the stubble which is whirled round and carried off:" comp. Is. xvii. 13, a passage which depends on the verse before us.—*As fire*, ver. 14, as destructively. The *hills* are mentioned, as is obvious from the parallel clause, in reference to what covers them.

Ver. 16–18.—Ver. 16. *Fill their faces with shame, and may they seek thy name, O Lord.* Ver 17. *Let them be put to shame and terrified for ever, and blush and perish.* Ver. 18. *And may they know that thou with thy name, O Lord, art above the most high over the whole earth.*—The object aimed at is intimated in the words: may they seek thy name, and may they know thy name. "Fill their face with shame" serves as the basis of the first, and the contents of ver. 18, of the second: we can never be more confident of the destruction of our enemies, and of our own deliverance, than when these tend to promote the exaltation and the glory of God. In point of form, however, the second clause of ver. 16 is independent of, and co-ordinate with the first: —not: that they may seek. Otherwise, we destroy the number of petitions, twelve in all, seven in this paragraph, corresponding to the number seven of the verses of the preceding paragraph.— On "their faces," ver. 16, comp. Ps. lxix. 7. "Thy name" is equivalent to "thee, rich in deeds, glorious." "May they seek thee" (Berleb: as humble suppliants) has no reference to "conversion," but to the forced subjection of those who, like Pharaoh, are not able to hold out any longer against the inflictions of God. This is evident, also, from the following verse, where the Psalmist prays for the *destruction* of the enemies.[a] It would be the height of folly to hope for the conversion of such enemies.—In the 18th verse, the acknowledgment is not a voluntary but a forced acknowledgment: comp. Ps. lix. 13; 1 Sam. xvii. 46. The שִׁמְךָ is the accus., just as the לֵב in ver, 5, and the כֹּחַ in ver. 3, "as

[a] Calvin: "It is, I acknowledge, the first step towards repentance, when men, humbled by chastisements, yield of their own accord; but the prophet adverts merely to a forced and servile submission. For it often happens that the wicked, subdued by sufferings, give glory to God for a time. But because in a short while they exhibit a frantic rage, their hypocrisy is thus sufficiently exposed, and the ferocity which lay concealed in their hearts becomes apparent. He wishes, therefore, that the wicked may be compelled reluctantly to acknowledge God: that at least their fury, at present breaking forth with impunity, may be kept under restraint and within due bounds.

to thy name," *i. e.*, "*for the sake* of thy name:" thou who art rich in deeds, glorious. The *name*, the product of the deeds, is what belongs to the Lord, above all others who are called lords and gods: these are all *nameless*; the names which they bear are mere names, shells without kernel. That we are not to give the first half of the verse a sense complete in itself—*and know that thou alone hast the name Jehovah*—is evident from the parallel and in all probability dependant passage, Is. xxxvii. 16, where Hezekiah says: Jehovah, Sabbaoth, God of Israel, thou art God Ha-elohim, alone for all the kingdoms of the earth, 2 Kings xix. 19.[a] The Eljou is the predicate here just as Elohim is there.

PSALM LXXXIV.

The Psalmist pronounces himself happy in the possession of the highest of all blessings, that of dwelling in the house of God, and that of communion with him; for inheritance follows adoption: to those who participate in this blessing, the Lord will by his salvation yet give occasion to praise him, ver. 1–4. He pronounces those happy (salvation to himself because he belongs to their number) who place their trust in God, and walk blamelessly: for their misery shall be turned into salvation, and the end of their way is praise and thanks, ver. 5–7. The *prayer* rises on the basis of the *meditation:* may God be gracious to his anointed, for his favour is the highest good, whoever possesses it is sure of salvation, ver. 8–12.

The whole Psalm contains 12 verses. It is divided into two strophes; one of *meditation*, in seven verses, and the other of *prayer*, in five. The seven is divided into four and three: salvation as the necessary consequence of dwelling in the house of the Lord, and salvation as the consequence of piety and blamelessness. The five which points out the second strophe as supplementary to the first is divided into an introduction and a conclusion, each of one verse, and a main body of three verses. The Selah stands where it is most necessary, at the end of the

[a] Is. xxxvii. 20 is to be supplemented from both these passages: *and all the kingdoms of the earth may experience that thou, O Lord, alone (art God).*

first part of the first strophe, and at the end of the introduction of the prayer-strophe. It is here that the parts, which ought to be kept separate, admit most easily of being read together. The name Jehovah occurs three times in the first and three times in the second strophe. Sabbaoth is added twice in each. If we add to the six repetitions of Jehovah the four repetitions of Elohim, which occurs generally in a subordinate position, so that Jehovah preponderates, we have altogether ten names of God.

The ninth verse renders it evident that the speaker is the Anointed of the Lord. This fact can be reconciled with the title, which ascribes the Psalm to the sons of Korah, only by the supposition that it was sung from the soul of the Anointed: comp. the Intro. to Ps. xl. and xliii., where the case is exactly the same.

The Psalm gives very slight intimation as to the *situation* of the Anointed. That he was in a *calamitous situation* is obvious from the whole tendency of the Psalm, which is manifestly designed to pour consolation into the soul of the sufferer, and in particular from "they shall still praise thee," in ver. 4, "going through the valley of tears," in ver. 6, and the prayer in ver. 8 and 9, which is that of a sufferer standing in need of divine assistance. It is intimated in ver. 7 that the sufferer particularly is separated from the *sanctuary*. Farther, the Anointed stands in inward and near relation to the Lord, ver. 1–4; he is one who has his strength in the Lord, and trusts in him, vers. 5 and 12, and who has walked blamelessly, vers. 5 and 11, yea he stands as the teacher in Israel of these great virtues, ver. 6.

These marks lead to *David in his flight from Absalom;* they meet together as applicable no where else. This result obtained from the consideration of the Psalm itself is confirmed by comparing it with Ps. xlii. and xliii., in which the traces of that time, and the reference to these events, are still more apparent. These Psalms are so closely allied to the one before us, that it is impossible to consider them apart. They both bear a considerable resemblance to it, even externally, as might be made to appear,—Pss. xlii. and xliii. stand at the head of the Korahite Elohim Psalms, and this Psalm at the head of the Korahite Jehovah Psalms, so that thus both are in a peculiarly close manner connected together. And they possess the following points in

common:—they were composed by the sons of Korah from the soul of the Anointed; they are all characterized by an ardour of feeling, and a tender pathos, which here, as is also indicated by the title, assumes the form of a pathetic *joy;* in all, the Anointed is in a state of suffering, and is separated from the sanctuary. The fundamental thought also of this Psalm occurs in Ps. xlii. 6, 8, where the Psalmist obtains comfort in his misery, and the hope of salvation because he becomes absorbed in a consciousness of possessing the favour of God. As to particular expressions comp. ver. 4 with Ps. xlii. 5, ver. 7 with Ps. xliii. 3, ver. 9 with Ps. xliii. 5.[a]

The sons of Korah perform here as in Ps. xlii. xliii., for David in the time of Absalom, the same duty which David once performed for Saul. They sang quietness and peace *from* their soul to his, giving back to him a part of what they themselves had received from him the "teacher," ver. 6. They brought to his recollection the foundations of his hope: the blessing of communion with God yet remaining to him, which, as the fountain of all other blessings, must brighten his piety and his blameless walk in the estimation of all who regard God, and finally his suffering in joy.

The contents are nearly allied to those of Ps. lxiii., which was composed by David himself in the time of Absalom. There also we find hope in reference to the future rising on the basis of inward union with God enjoyed by the Psalmist at present.

It has been maintained as an argument against the composition of the Psalm in the time of David, that the sanctuary in ver. 1, 2, 3, 10, must have been a *temple*, a large building. But the mention of "habitations" of God, in ver. 1, does not imply this; for even the tabernacle-temple was divided into several apartments, and the habitations and sanctuaries of the Lord are

[a] Even Ewald acknowledges that Ps. xlii., xliii., and Ps. lxxxiv., are inseparably connected. "These Psalms are manifestly so similar, in colouring of language, in plan and structure, in overflowing fulness of rare figures, finally, in refined delicacy and tenderness of thought, and yet every thing in both poems is so entirely original, while nothing is the result of imitation from the other, that it is impossible to avoid coming to the conclusion that both are the product of the same poet." It is singular that with such acknowledgments and concessions the inference so necessarily flowing from them in favour of the titles should be disregarded. How comes it that in the titles those Psalms are attributed to the same authors which on internal grounds are so intimately related, if these titles were composed upon mere conjecture?

mentioned in other Psalms which manifestly belong to the times of David, Ps. xliii. 3, lxviii. 35. The same cannot be said of "courts" in ver. 2 and 10. The tabernacle, and therefore probably also the tent erected by David for the ark of the covenant on Mount Zion, had certainly only *one* court. But in poetical language we not unfrequently find *courts* used in the sense of the *space before the sanctuary*, where in reality there was only one court. Thus, for example, in Ps. lxv. 4, which was composed by David; again in Is. i. 12, "who hath required this of you that ye tread my courts," Ps. xcii. 13, c. 4: the one of the two courts of Solomon's temple was *the court of the Priests*, and it therefore cannot be meant as included. Finally, it is only by adopting a false rendering that ver. 3 can be considered as making any mention of *birds' nests* in the sanctuary; the same may be said of ver. 5 ss., in regard to pilgrimages,—it is without any good reason, besides, that it has been said of these that they did not exist in the time of David. An intimation that the sanctuary at that time existed in a *tent*, occurs in ver. 10. The reference to the tabernacle-house of God undoubtedly called forth in that passage the mention of the *tents* of wickedness, instead of its palaces.

The Psalm has had the misfortune to be *misunderstood* in various ways, particularly by the modern expositors whose perception of its meaning is upon the whole much more profound than was that of Luther. The main ground of the misunderstandings is the falsely literal rendering of those passages in which mention is made of *the house of the Lord*. It is from this that has arisen the idea that there exists in the Psalm "an expression of earnest desire for the temple," in opposition to ver. 2, where the Psalmist *rejoices* as one who already enjoys the privilege of near access to God, to ver. 3, according to which the bird has already found its house and the swallow its nest in the house of God, and to ver. 10 in connection with to ver. 9, &c.

On the title "to the chief Musician after the manner (or according to the harp, comp. at title of Ps. viii.) of Gath, by the sons of Korah, a Psalm," Arnd remarks: The Gittith was a spiritual musical instrument on which these Psalms were played, which sounded pleasantly and joyfully. For the ancients did not play all the Psalms upon the same instrument, but they varied according to the strain of each Psalm. What should we learn

from this? That our heart, mouth, and tongue, should be the true spiritual musical instruments of God, the pleasant harps and the good sounding symbols, both mournful and joyful instruments according to the dispensation of God and the times." "To the Chief Musician," shews that the Psalm was intended for something more than what immediately gave occasion to it, that along with its individual application we must keep in view its application for all the suffering people of God: comp. the Intro. at Ps. xlii.

Ver. 1-4.—Ver. 1. *How beloved are thy dwelling places, O Lord, (Lord) of Hosts.* Ver. 2. *My soul longeth and even fainteth after the courts of the Lord. My heart and my flesh rejoice to the living God.* Ver. 3. *Even the bird has found a house, and the swallow a nest for herself, where she lays her young, thine altars, O Lord of Hosts, my king and my God.* Ver. 4. *Blessed are those who dwell in thy house, they shall still praise thee.*—The ידיד in ver. 1 signifies always *beloved* and never *lovely*; comp. at Ps. xlv. 1; and the second verse is in entire harmony with this, where the expression "how much loved they are (by me)" is expanded; and also the parallel passage, Ps. xxvii. "One thing I desire of the Lord, that do I seek after, that I may dwell in the house of the Lord." The Psalmist loves the habitations of the Lord, because he is sure of finding safety and protection there: comp., among other passages, Ps. xxvii. 5. The term Sabbaoth points to this ground as one to which marked prominence is given in what follows. The Lord of Heaven is rich in salvation on behalf of his own people; the man whom he takes into his presence is protected, and that, too, although the whole world were to rise up against him: comp. Ps. xxvii. 1, "Nothing can go entirely wrong with him whom the Most High has resolved to aid."—The *longing and fainting*, in ver. 2, do not at all indicate any desire completely unsatisfied at the time, but rather a spiritual hunger, which is immediately connected with satiety, a need which, as it has arisen from enjoyment, also calls for enjoyment. This is evident from the *rejoicing*, which stands, as far as the grammatical interpretation is concerned, inseparably connected with the longing and fainting, but which, in consequence of the erroneous view taken of the former, has been to no purpose, considered as equivalent to *to cry aloud*. רנן is of frequent oc-

currence in the Psalms, and always signifies *to rejoice*. He who can *rejoice* in God must be in possession of the object of his desire. In proportion as the soul has already enjoyed the grace of God, does it earnestly long after it; and in proportion as it longs after it does it rejoice in God. Arnd: "This is the effect of holy desire, the fruit of holy longing after God, for God is so gracious and condescending that he does not permit the heartfelt love and the holy desire which man bears towards him to pass unrewarded, but so gladdens the man that he refreshes him both in body and soul. There arises, therefore, out of heartfelt desire after God a heartfelt joy, or a true joy of the heart." The גם does not indicate a climax, but, as is frequently the case (comp., for example, Ps. cxxxvii. 1) is a mere particle of addition. The *soul*, *heart*, and *flesh* are exceedingly appropriate, when used together, as expressive of the whole man, and therefore, as indicating the intensity of the desire (comp. at Ps. lxiii. 1), and the second clause begins with "*they rejoice*," to which the nominative is soul, heart, and flesh. The "courts of the Lord" are the courts of the outward temple, which is also designated in ver. 1 as the habitations: the desire, however, is, not to be present in this temple *corporeally*, but spiritually, which is possible even in the case of external distance; the servants of the Lord dwell always spiritually with him in his temple, and are there cared for by him with fatherly love, comp. at Ps. xxvii. 4; xxxvi. 8; lxv. 4, and the parallel passages referred to there. The *court* is specially spoken of here, as in Ps. lxv. 4; xcii. 13, because in the "tabernacle of meeting" it formed the external place of concourse for the congregation; it is, therefore, there also the *spiritual* seat of its members; into it there flowed upon them out of the sanctuary the stream of the grace and love of God. The רנן with אל, to rejoice to God, who makes himself known in grace and love to the longing soul, in rejoice, in return or response, occurs only here. On אל חי comp. at Ps. xlii. 2.—The simple thought of ver. 3 is this: the dwelling in thy house, confiding relationship to thee, secures thy grace, with confidence and protection. The "bird" and the swallow is the Psalmist himself, the דרור need not to be very exactly defined; the connection in which it is used defines nothing except that from the parallel צפור, and the general sense of the passage, it must denote a little, helpless bird:

comp. Ps. xi. 1, where David calls himself a "little bird," Ps. lvi. Title (comp. lv. 6), where he calls himself "the dumb. dove of distant places," 1 Sam. xxvi. 20, where he calls himself a flea, and compares himself to a partridge on the mountains. There is an abbreviated comparison: like a little bird, which, after a long defenceless wandering, has found a house (Matth. viii. 20) in which it may dwell securely, a nest to which it may entrust with confidence its dearest possession, its young, thus have I, a poor wanderer, found safety and protection in thy house, O Lord. Jo. Arnd: "David gives thanks to the Lord for this, and says, my poor little soul, the terrified little bird has now found its right house, and its right nest, namely, thy altars; and if I had not found this beautiful house of God, I must have been for ever flying about, out of the right way. I would have been like a lonely bird on the house-top, like an owl in the desert, Ps. cii., like a solitary turtle dove; give not thy turtle dove into the hands of the enemies," says Ps. lxxiv. The גם does not connect the whole passage with what goes before (comp. Ew. § 622, Ps. lxxxv. 12); not: even the bird has found, but: the bird has even found. Feeble man, in this hard, troublous world, destitute of the help and grace of God, is compared to the "little bird," and the "swallow." The house, in an extended sense, is brought into notice as a place of safety for the bird, for the little bird itself, the nest as a place of safety for its most precious possession. On אשר for "where" comp. Ew. § 589. The את מזבחותיך is the accus. as at 1 Kings xix. 10, 14. The plural refers to the altar of burnt-offering, and the altar of incense-offering: comp. Num. iii. 31. The altars are specially mentioned instead of the whole house, because there the relation to God was concentrated. There the soul brings forward its spiritual offerings, which constitute the *soul* even of material sacrifices, and hears the much-loved responsive call of God, the assurance of his help, and his salvation, even when the body is not near the altar. "My king and my God" (joined together in this manner only in Ps. v. 2) gives, in connection with Sabbaoth, the ground why the Psalmist considers it such a happy thing for him that he has been permitted access to the altars of God, why the house of God is to him what its house and nest are to the little bird. How should he not feel infinitely safe whom his king and his God, he who guides the stars in their

courses, has taken him into his own dwelling-place. Luther took a correct view of this verse, as is obvious from his "*namely* thine altars." Modern expositors, however, have gone astray, in consequence of their having unfortunately taken up the idea that the Psalm contains the expression of the earnest longings after the temple of one separated from it. They translate: "even the sparrows find an house, and the swallows a nest, for themselves, where they lay their young, in thine altars, Jehovah Sabbaoth, my King and my God," and suppose the idea intended to be conveyed is: and are thus happier than I am, who am separated from thy sanctuary. But the thought obtained in this way is one, notwithstanding the defence which has been made of it by De Wette and Maurer, of a trivial character, and unworthy the holy earnestness of Israelitish poetry; a bird, certainly, was in no very enviable situation which had fixed its place of dwelling and its nest in the house of the Lord. The main thing, moreover, *I am less fortunate than they* is *wanting*, and added to the passage without any reason whatever. The "*with* thine altars," instead of "at," is very strange, and certainly the unusual אֵת would not have been used for the purpose of avoiding the ambiguity. The birds durst build their nest if generally in the sanctuary, yet certainly not in the neighbourhood of the *altars*. Finally, verse 4th is not at all suitable, if we suppose that ver. 3 contains a lamentation over absence from the sanctuary; and even ver. 2 can only by a false interpretation be brought, in this case, into harmony with ver. 3.—The *dwellers in the house of God*, in ver. 4, are, as was formerly shown at Ps. xxvii. 4, not those who regularly repair to it, but the inmates (Jer. xx. 6) of God's house in a spiritual sense. As the Psalmist, according to what has been said before, belongs to their number, in praising their happiness, he praises at the same time his own: happy, therefore, also I. In the second clause, the ground of this praise is given: *for they shall still* (even though for the present they may be in misery) *praise him*; he will, by imparting to them his salvation, give them yet occasion to do so: comp. "he will praise me," for "he will get occasion to do so," Ps. l. 15, 23, and also lxxix 13. It is usually translated: always they praise thee. But with this construction the use of עוֹד in the parallel passage, Ps. xlii. 6, is not attended to. Besides, עוֹד never means *always*. Gen. xlvi. 29 is to be trans-

lated: and he wept still upon his neck when Israel spoke. In Ruth i. 14, the עוד, "they wept *still*," refers back to ver. 9.

The sons of Korah now open up, in ver. 5–7, to the anointed of the Lord the *second* fountain of consolation, they point out to him the pledge of salvation which had been imparted to him through his trust in God and the blamelessness of his walk.—Ver. 5. *Blessed is the man whose strength is in thee, in whose hearts (are) ways.* Ver. 6. *Going through the valley of tears, they make it a well; the teacher is even covered with blessing.* Ver. 7. *They go from strength to strength, he appears before God in Zion.*—Ver. 6 and 7 contain the grounds on which the declaration of blessedness made in ver. 5 is founded: Blessed are they, for in passing through the valley of tears, &c. Ver. 5 contains *two* conditions of salvation. *First*, that a man has his strength in God, has him as his strength. Jo. Arnd: "But what does having God for our strength mean? It means that we place the trust of our heart, our confidence, help, and consolation only in him, and in no creature, be it power, skill, honour, or riches. That is a happy man who knows in his heart of no other strength, help, and comfort than of God." The *second* condition of salvation is, that a man has *ways*, *made roads*, in his heart. By this is designated zealous moral effort, blamelessness and righteousness. The heart of man in its natural condition, appears like a pathless wilderness, full of cliffs and precipices; and repentance is a levelling of the roads. The following passages are parallel: Ps. l. 23, "whoso offereth praise (= has his strength in thee) and whoever *prepares a way*, to him will I show the salvation of God;" Prov. xvi. 17, "the highway of the upright (in opposition to the pathlessness of the wicked) is far from evil &c." and Is. xl. 3, 4, "prepare the way of the Lord, make straight in the heath a pathway for our God; every valley is exalted, and every hill shall be made low, and every steep place shall be made plain, and the rugged place shall become a valley:" comp. the proof given in the Christol. iii. p. 395, that by the figurative language of the preparing of the ways we are to understand the zeal of moral effort as referred to in that passage. Both of these conditions of salvation are *united*, as they are here, in Ps. xxvi.: the second has prominence given to it, for example, in Ps. xv.; Ps. xxiv. As in the 12th verse, "who trusts in thee" cor-

responds to "who has his strength in thee," "who walk blamelessly," in ver. 11, corresponds to "the ways in their hearts." Luther's translation is not sufficiently exact: who walk after thee from the heart; those of recent date are entirely false: whose heart thinks upon the streets, the pilgrimages to Jerusalem. The pilgrimages are in no respect suitable if the connection be viewed correctly. מסלות does not mean ways generally, but *made roads*, it means *streets*, not once *the streets*, which is still much too vague.—The sense of ver. 6 is: to those whose mind is in this state, suffering is turned into joy, misery into salvation. "Wandering" is not, "*although* they wander," but "*while* they wander." The stat. constr. stands, while, at the same time, the preposition cannot be omitted: comp. at Ps. ii. 12. There is a reference to the second half of the preceding verse: those who have prepared the ways of their heart shall be prospered in regard to their outward ways. The *valley*, properly the depth, or the deep, is an emblem of a low and miserable condition. Into such a valley David found himself cast down from the height of his prosperity in the time of Absalom. The old translators, with wonderful agreement, give to בכא the sense of *weeping*; and even the Massorah remarks that the א at the end stands instead of ך. Others, on the ground that the form with the א never occurs, consider Baka as the name of a tree, which is mentioned in 2 Sam. v. 23, 24, and the parallel passage in Chron., according to the old translators, a mulberry tree, according to Celsus in Hierobot., a tree something like the balsam shrub. If we adopt this view, we must consider that the reason why the valley of the Baca tree is mentioned is, that the tree has its name from weeping;[a] so that in reality the sense is the same as on the former view,—*in the valley of the tear-shrubs*. The appellation of Zalmon in Ps. lxviii. 14 is similar to this. Then, against the idea that the Baca tree grows only in *dry places*, that the valley of Baca, therefore, simply denotes such a place, it may be urged with effect that *valleys are not usually dry*, and that the Baca tree, according to the only passage in Scripture where it is mentioned, grew in the very fruitful valley of Rephaim, Is. xvii. 6. In this case, also, instead of, "they make it a well," we would have expected, "they make it *rich* in wells." But that whole reference to the Baca trees must,

[a] Abul Fadl, in Celsus i. p. 336, says of the Arabian Baca tree: when its leaf is cut, a certain tear drops from it, white, warm, sharp, yet of no virtue.

in all probability, be given up. As nothing remains left of them except the name, the naming of them is flat and trifling enough. In the parallel, and, in all probability, fundamental passage, Ps. xxiii. 4, there occurs also an appellative: even though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death: comp. also Ps. cxxvi. 5, 6. The sweet fountain of *salvation* stands in marked contrast to the bitter fountain of weeping. A valley of *weeping* also occurs in Burkhardt ii. p. 977. Gesen.: "after you have advanced two hours, the valley for an hour gets the name of *Wady Beka* (البكاء), or the valley of the weeping, and, according to tradition, it got the name because a Bedouin wept, when, as his enemy was pursuing him, his dromedary fell down, and he therefore could not follow his companion."[a] We adopt, therefore, the *vale of tears*.[b] David experienced what it was to wander in this valley of tears, when he went up by Mount Olivet and *wept*, 2 Sam. xv. 30. As the valley of weeping is an image of misery, the fountain is an image of salvation. (Luther gives erroneously the plural instead of the singular.) *They make it*, namely, inasmuch as they, by their faith and their righteousness, call down the grace of God upon them, or open the doors for the blessing. The גם stands as in ver. 2. The יעטוּ is the fut. in Kal as at Lev. xiii. 45, Jer. xliii. 12. The verb signifies always in Kal *to be covered*, even in Lev. xiii. 45, Mich. iii. 7, with the accusative of the thing with which any one is covered, here ברכות, the plural, pointing to the fulness and multiplicity of the blessing. מורה is the instructor, the teacher, 2 Kings xvii. 28, Is. xxx. 20, Prov. v. 13. The object of the teaching is to be taken from ver. 5: who not only has his own strength in the Lord, and his ways in his own heart, but who also directs others to this, instructs them. This was David's high calling and earnest endeavour, as his Psalms testify; comp., for example, Ps. xv., Ps. lxii. 8. The correct view is to be found in Luther. The translation which has hitherto been the common one is altogether erroneous; and the harvest-rain covers it with

[a] Burkhardt knew nothing of the Baca trees growing in this valley, and Gesenius in vain endeavours to propose them here contrary to the Arabic authorities.

[b] Ven.: A *valley* represents a depressed and abject condition; *a valley of tears* must therefore represent such a condition in connection with much misery, and affording very little consolation, or none at all.

blessing. For the מורה signifies always "teaching," or "teacher," never "rain," or "early rain," which is always יורה, with the single exception of Joel ii. 23, where, however, מורה is used in the sense of the early rain, only on account of the similarity in sound to the מורה, which occurs immediately before in its ordinary sense; comp. the Christol. on the passage. The עטה occurs only once in Hiph., in Kal throughout quite generally. The ברכות would not have stood without the preposition, had it not been that עטה is so constantly used with the accusative of the thing with which one is covered, that there is no danger of mistake. The omission of the suffix referring to the valley would be harsh.—The חיל in ver. 7 is power, might, ability; comp. "In God we shall get ability, and he will tread down our enemies," in Ps. xl. 12. *From strength to strength*, the Berleb.; from one degree of strength to another. Comp. Jer. ix. 2, Ps. cxliv. 3. The subject in יראה is, as is apparent, *the teacher*. The אל in the phrase "to appear before God," elsewhere rarely used, is selected with reference to the second clause; from strength *to* strength, and finally *to* God in Zion. Everywhere the faithful *appear* then praising and giving thanks, after their sufferings have been brought to a close. Comp. ver. 4. That there is here a special reference to the violent separation of the Psalmist from the sanctuary, is evident on comparing Ps. xliii. 3.[a]

The *prayer* in ver. 8–14 follows the meditation.—Ver. 8. *O Lord, God, God of hosts, hear my prayer, accept it, O God of Jacob. Selah.* Ver. 9. *Thou, our shield, behold now, O God, and look upon the face of thine anointed.* Ver. 10. *For a day in thy courts is better than a thousand (elsewhere). I will rather lie at the threshold in the house of my God than dwell in the tents of wickedness.* Ver. 11. *For a sun and shield is the Lord, God, the Lord gives grace and glory, he denies no good to those who walk blamelessly.* Ver. 12. *O Lord of hosts, blessed is the man who trusteth in thee.*—"Our shield" in ver. 9 (comp. at Ps. iii. 3) shews, as "God of Jacob" in ver. 8 had already done, that in the one person the whole people is exposed to danger. It is emphatically placed foremost, because on

[a] Luther, after the example of the Septuagint, as if the reading were אֵל, translates "the God of Gods," and therefore wholly misunderstands the passage.

it the assurance of the answer to the prayer depends. The translation, "look upon our shield," is altogether at fault. The 11th verse is sufficient proof against it.—On "behold," comp. 2 Kings xix. 16, "incline, O Lord, thine ear and hear, open, O Lord, thine eyes and behold," where the object to be heard and seen is more particularly described. "The whole forementioned state of things" is what must be supplied. The face of the anointed is his humble supplicatory face. "Thine anointed" contains in it the basis of the prayer: my face, because I am thine anointed, comp. Ps. xviii. 50, cxxxii. 10.—The Psalmist, in ver. 10, gives the reason why he turns to the Lord with beseeching prayer, why his highest wish is that he may help him: impart to me thy favour and help me, for to be in thy favour is the highest of all good. The "for" by which the verse is connected with the preceding one, is fatal to the idea, that it is not the Anointed that is praying for himself, but the Psalmist that is praying for his king, and also to the supposition, that the expressions which refer to the house of God are to be interpreted externally. This view could not be held unless it were the case that the Psalmist, in the preceding context, had been praying for restoration to the outward sanctuary. Ver. 12, however, would not in this case be suitable. *Than a thousand,*—which are spent elsewhere, in the world, and in pursuit of its pleasures. At the expression, "I will rather lie at the door," like Lazarus at the door of the rich man, I will rather be content with the most despised place in the kingdom of God, the most distant relation to him and to his grace, we must suppose added, "if it cannot be otherwise, if God does not permit me to a nearer approach to him." There is not here any expression of unpretending modesty and humility, as Calvin[a] supposes, but an expression of the very high sense which the Psalmist had of the value of the grace of God in salvation, above all the pleasures and all the means of support furnished by the world. Instead of the mere "dwelling," Luther has falsely substituted "*long* dwelling." We are to think of a dwelling whether as an inhabitant or as a client, and of *wickedness,* as richly fur-

a "A rare example of piety. For although many desire for themselves a place in the Church, yet ambition is so prevalent that few are content to remain in the common number. For almost all are so hurried on by the mad desire of rising higher, that they cannot remain at rest unless they occupy a prominent place."

nished with all human means as was the case with the enemies of David in the time of Absalom.[a] We have the same thought in another form in Ps. iv. 7.—In the 11th verse, we have the reason assigned why the favour of God is the best gift; whoever has him for a friend, receives in due season a fulness of gifts, and may therefore be comforted and happy even in misery. *A sun and a shield*, that is, deliverance and protection. Instead of the figure of the sun, the more common one in other passages is usually that of *light;* comp. especially Ps. xxvii. 1; still there occur the passages, Is. lx. 19, 20, Mal. iii. 20, Rev. xxi. 23, of a kindred nature to the one before us. Arnd: As the natural sun is the light, life, and joy of all natural things, so God himself is the light of all those who dwell in his house, their salvation, and the strength of their life. But the Lord is not only a sun, he is also a shield,—such a protection as covers the body and soul like a shield, so that no murderous weapon of the devil and of men can strike and mortally wound us." By *grace* is meant the effects and gifts of grace, deliverance from enemies, &c. On *glory*, comp. at Ps. xlix. 16; and on "walk in a blameless," for as a blameless man, at Ps. xv. 2.

PSALM LXXXV.

The contents of the Psalm are made up of a prayer on the part of the people, for deliverance during long protracted misery. The prayer rises first in ver. 1–4, upon the foundation of the early grace of God; after this it is more fully developed in ver. 5–7, and thus the number seven of this first strophe is divided into a four and a three. The second strophe, which contains the promise of deliverance, consist exactly of the same length. Only there is wanting a verse at the conclusion, which, as in Ps. lxxxi., is to be supplied from the title; and we are thus reminded of Hab. iii. 19, where the usual appendage borrowed from the titles of the Psalms stands at the close.

It has been generally supposed that the people gives thanks in

a Ven.: It is not any tents, or tents of any kind, that are understood, but rich, powerful, glorious, and splendid tents.

ver. 1–3, for restoration from captivity; and after this, in ver 7, prays to the Lord to *complete* the work which he had begun, to remove *entirely* his anger from the people, and to put them in *full* possession of deliverance. But the idea that vers. 1–3 refer to restoration from captivity, depends altogether upon a wrong translation of the phrase שב שבות in ver. 1. This never means to bring back the prisoners, not even, to turn the captivity, but always to turn back to the prison, that is, to the misery (comp. at Ps. xiv. 7); and this translation is especially demanded here by the שובנו in ver. 4, and the תשוב in verse 6. The clause at the beginning "thou hast shewn thyself merciful to thy land," is altogether against the reference to the Babylonish captivity. "These words," remarks Claus with correctness, "appear much rather to suit a time when the people dwelt in their land, and had been visited with severe punishment." Further, the forgiveness and the shewing of favour in ver. 1–3, are of a *universal* character, and just as then the wrath is *completely* removed, so in ver. 4–7 the people still lie *completely* under wrath. Ver. 1–3 cannot therefore be considered as referring to events of *recent* occurrence, but to transactions of a *remote age*. Luther correctly gives: thou who hast been gracious in the *days of old*. The people cannot be considered as praying at ver. 4, &c., that the Lord would *complete* a work, which, according to ver. 1–3, had been begun, but that he would anew act at *the present time* as he had done in the *the days of old*.

The Psalm will not bear an historical exposition. The description of the distress out of which the people had been delivered, is conveyed in terms which are entirely general; and in like manner, there are no individual references in the representation of the relations of the present. In the confident expectations entertained of deliverance, the prominence given to *peace* would seem to point to an oppression which had arisen from *enemies*; while, on the other hand, "the land gives it increase," especially when viewed in connection with the fundamental passage, Lev. xxvi. 4, appears to indicate that the distress had arisen from a failure of the crops. We are hence entitled to draw the conclusion that the Psalm was designed for the use of all times of protracted distress—of all times in which men did not witness the fulfilment of the promise of Lev. xxvi. 3–13; the bringing to re-

membrance of which was evidently the design of the second part. The time of composition cannot be determined; the title, "To the Chief Musician by the sons of Korah, a Psalm;" gives as little clue to this as it does to the contents of the Psalm.

The introduction, ver. 1–4, is entirely similar to the introduction in Ps. ix., and also in Ps. xl.: compare also Ps. lxxxiii. 9–1. There cannot be given any more solid foundation for a prayer in which it is desired that God should do something, than to appeal to what he *has already done*, inasmuch as, just because he is the unchangeable God, those deeds which proceed from the necessity of his being, partake of a prophetic character.—Ver. 1. *Thou didst manifest thyself gracious, O Lord, to thy land. Thou didst turn back to the prison house of Jacob.* Ver. 2. *Thou didst take away the iniquity of thy people, thou didst cover all their sins. Selah.* Ver. 3. *Thou didst take away all thy wrath, thou didst cease from the fury of thine anger.* Ver. 4. *Turn back therefore to us, O God, our Saviour, and cause thy wrath against us to cease.*—Every man is left at liberty to think upon one of great examples of the divine compassion in the days of old. The pause after ver. 1, pointed out by the Selah, is intended to bind ver. 2 and 3 closely together, and in this way to intimate that every thing said of the early grace of God was only designed to serve the object of giving a basis to the prayer for *new* grace. The הֵישִׁיב stands in ver, 3, absol. *to cease from,* as in Ez. xviii. 30, 32. It is evident from Ez. xiv. 6, that this usage is properly dependant upon an omission,—to turn back the face or the heart: compare on such frequent omissions of the object in Hiph. Ew. § 239. Maurer's translation, "thou hast stilled *in part* thine anger," is not only "unnatural," but is contradicted in one breath by the Psalmist: *all* their sins, *all* thy wrath. Allusion is made to Ex. xxxii. 12, where Moses says to God: turn back from the fierceness of thy wrath. This prayer was at that time graciously heard.—The שׁוּב with the accusative has always the sense of to turn back: compare at Ps. xiv. 7. The עִמְּנוּ belongs to the verb: make it in our case to cease; compare מֵעִמּוֹ, *from beside him*, so that it is no longer near him, in Ps. lxxxix. 33. To connect the noun with the verb of indignation by the עִם, is not usual:

Ver. 5–7.—Ver. 5. *Wilt thou then be angry with us for ever?*

prolong thine anger to all generations? Ver. 6. *Wilt thou not turn back, quicken us, and shall not thy people rejoice in thee?* Ver. 7. *Let us behold, O Lord, thy mercy, and give us thy salvation.*—On ver. 5, Berleb.: "The question supplicates or is put in this mournful form, with a view to move the heart of God, who, in virtue of his fatherly love, could not possibly fail to return a favourable answer." Michaelis: "while thine anger on other occasions lasts only *one moment*," Ps. xxx. 5: comp. Ex. xxxiv. 3, 6.—The תשוב in ver. 6 cannot, from ver. 1 and 5, be construed as an adverb, it rather stands in immediate connection with תחיינו: on this word comp. Ps. lxxx. 18; Deut. xxxii. 39; Hos. vi. 2. The return of God is the indispensable condition and means of quickening. The "thy people" contains the basis of the prayer. To rejoice in their God (comp. Ps. v. 11, xl. 16) is essential to the being of the people of God.

Ver. 8–11.—Ver. 8. *I will hear what God the Lord speaks. For he speaks peace to his pious ones, only that they return not to foolishness.* Ver. 9. *Truly salvation is near to those who fear him, that glory may dwell in our land.* Ver. 10. *Mercy and truth meet each other, righteousness and peace embrace each other.* Ver. 11. *Truth springs from the earth, and righteousness looks from heaven.*—It is not the Psalmist that speaks in ver. 8, but the people, as in the fourth and following verses, and in the whole Psalm; and the answer is got by the same party from whom the question and the prayer had proceeded. האל is equivalent to "our God," comp. Ps. lxviii. 20. The "for" contains the basis of the zeal and the joy (*I will* hear) with which the people prepares to listen. The church has already observed, that the answer to her prayer is a *favourable* one. In reference to the *speeches* of God, the Berleb. Bible: "Dost thou ask how this happens? Know that it happens in the simplest and surest of all ways, by his own holy and good spirit, when he imparts to the soul such good instruction and impression as that thus it learns to know his will. He speaks, therefore, nothing else than what already stands in the Bible, and only brings to remembrance what he had already said, and caused to be written. He explains it, points it out, and applies it to the condition of souls and to all circumstances." It has been already observed, that the address of God here is, in particular, nothing else than a re-

petition of Lev. xxvi. 3–13. If that passage be compared, it will immediately be perceived, that by the *peace* nothing else is understood than protection against enemies, with which in that passage also the fertility of the land is conjoined as the *second* gift of a gracious God. The clause designed to be read with emphasis "*to his saints*," following up the expression of a previous verse, "to his people," and the still more definite clause, "and they may not return to foolishness," *i. e.*, "but that only they do not return," indicate that as the fundamental promise, so here every thing expressly and repeatedly is made dependant on obedience to the commandments of God, and also that the promise drawn from it is throughout a conditional one, the *new* salvation rests throughout upon the foundation of the *new* obedience. Comp. Ps. lxxx. 18. Inasmuch as this was always *imperfect*, the people of the Old Testament never obtained full possession of the blessings here promised.—The אַךְ in ver. 9 is the particle of assurance: comp. at Ps. lviii. 12.—On the 10th and 11th verses many errors have been fallen into in regard to the subject matter, from not observing that the language from the relation in which the passage stands to the first part cannot possibly apply to any thing else than to the *gifts of God:* we have there what the Lord has formerly fulfilled and *ought* now to perform, and here what he is about to perform, exactly in accordance with "he speaks peace to his people," of ver. 8, and with the fundamental passage.—The *mercy* in ver. 10 is the *mercy* of God, the *truth* therefore can be nothing but *his* truth. For both the mercy and the truth of God occur thus bound up together, (comp. for example Ps. xxv. 10; xl. 11; lxi. 7), and if the truth were to be viewed in connection with men, it would be necessary to define it more exactly.[a] *The meeting each other, and the kissing*, denote simultaneous appearance and friendly agreement. The righteousness, as is evident from the parallelism with the first clause, and ver. 11, is not subjective righteousness, but righteousness as the gift of God, the matter-of-fact proclamation of righteousness; comp. at Ps. xxiii. 3.—*The righteousness springs out of the earth*, ver. 11, *as to its consequences*, in the rich increase, which God, always consistent in word and deed, gives to the land;

a Cocceius: "the former denotes paternal love and its gifts, the opposites of anger, enmity, and condemnation, the latter the exhibition and the fulfilment of the promises."

comp. "our land gives its increase," ver. 12, which serves as a commentary. To "the righteousness looks down from heaven," that is, descending in blessings upon the people of God, we have there the corresponding clause, "the Lord gives what is good." Is. xiv. 8 is parallel and probably dependent upon this passage: "drop down ye heavens from above, and let the skies pour down righteousness, let the earth open, and let it bring forth salvation, and let it cause righteousness to spring up together."

Ver. 12, 13.—Ver. 12. *The Lord also gives what is good, and our land gives it increase.* Ver. 13. *Righteousness goes forth before him and makes her footsteps a way.*—On the second half of the 12th verse comp. Ps. lxvii. 6. Here as there the words are from Lev. xxvi. 4.—The way to the right interpretation of the second half of ver. 13 has been obstructed by perversely interpreting righteousness in a moral sense. Righteousness makes her footsteps for a way (comp, Is. li. 10), and thus we are enabled to walk in the ways of righteousness and salvation, comp. at Ps. xxiii. 3.

PSALM LXXXVI.

The Psalmist grounds his prayer for assistance upon the mercy and forgiving love of God towards his own people, according to which he cannot overlook their misery or permit their prayer to be unheard, ver. 1–5, then turning from what is the *first* of the enemies of trust in God in trouble, viz., doubt as to his *willingness* to help, to what is the *second*, viz., doubt as to his *ability*, he grounds it next upon the omnipotence and glory of God—so great that in future times all the heathen will do homage to him their creator, ver. 6–10. To these foundations there is added a *third* in ver. 11–13, the early inexpressible grace of God: inasmuch as God formerly delivered him from the jaws of death, how should he not *now* help him, and should not the Psalmist confidently hope for his assistance? The prayer and the representation of the distress up to this point have been set forth only incidentally and in connection with the representation of the grounds of the confidence; now, however, that these last had been completely given, they break forth in an independent and developed form, ver. 14–17.

The Psalm is divided into two strophes. The number ten of the first is divided by a five, the number seven of the second by a four and a three. The first strophe gives the general grounds of confidence, and in the second the prayer follows upon the special grounds.

The title, "a *Prayer* of David," is justified as far as the first part of it is concerned, by the circumstance that the Psalm, in point of form, bears throughout a *devotional* and *supplicatory* character; it never sinks down from prayer to *meditation*, comp. on תפלה at Ps. xc., where the meditation gives rise to addresses to God of unwonted frequency. It has been objected against the *second* part of the title that the Psalm, in consequence of the numerous borrowed passages which it contains, is manifestly the production of a *later* date. But the circumstance that the passages, with the exception of those from the Pentateuch, are all borrowed from the Davidic Psalms, and none from later productions, shews that we must keep by the era of David, and at the same time leads to the idea,—an idea which we shall find confirmed by subsequent examination,—that the borrowed passages originated not in *feebleness* but in *design*.

The situation in the life of David may with certainty be ascertained. The Psalmist finds himself in misery, deprived of all human help, ver. 1; his life is endangered by a band of proud, violent, ungodly men, ver. 2, 14, after God, at an early period, had shewn towards him great mercy, and had delivered his soul out of the deep hell, ver. 13. As the last passage manifestly refers to his deliverance from *the hand of Saul*, we are *here* limited to those dangers to which he was exposed in the time of Absalom.

It is very probable that this Psalm was sung by the Sons of Korah from the soul of David, when they accompanied him in his banishment. This was manifestly the case with Ps. xlii., xliii., and lxxxiv., and the composition by the Sons of Korah, which it was necessary should be there expressly marked, as Ps. xlii. and xliii. *open* the series of the Korahitic Elohim-Psalms, and Ps. lxxxiv. the series of the Kor. Jehovah-Psalms, is in the case before us determined with equal certainty by the position of the Psalm in the middle of the Korahitic Psalms, from which the title got its necessary *supplement*. The prayer, however, is David's, not

only because it was intended for him, and was sung from his soul, the Korahites did no more than give back to him what they had got from him; but also because the poem is throughout interwoven with quotations from the Davidic Psalms. This fact is much more easily explained if we suppose one of the sons of Korah rather than David himself to have been the author. It must have gone to David's heart to have been comforted with words which he had either addressed to his own afflicted soul in troubles which the Lord had gloriously averted, or with which he had comforted *others*. The tenderness of feeling which characterizes the other Psalms which the sons of Korah sang to their afflicted king, is so very marked in this case that it is impossible to overlook it.

It has been objected to the Psalm that the sentiment is not at all of a noble character, the poet boasts of his piety. This objection has been met in our remarks upon other Psalms, in reference to which it has been in like manner brought forward; comp. for example Ps. xvii. xviii. It is a very preposterous objection to be urged against one who founds his hope entirely upon the *forgiving mercy* of God, comp. ver. 5, 15.

Ver. 1–5.—Ver. 1. *Incline, O Lord, thine ear, hear me, for I am miserable and poor.* Ver. 2. *Protect my soul, for I am pious, deliver thy servant, O thou my God, who trusts in thee.* Ver. 3. *Be gracious to me, O God, for I cry to thee continually.* Ver. 4. *Rejoice the soul of thy servant, for to thee, O Lord, I draw my soul.* Ver 5. *For thou, O Lord, art good and forgiving, and rich in mercy for all who call upon thee.*—In ver. 1 the misery is not considered as forming of itself a sufficient basis for the prayer,—this basis is supplemented in what follows. I am miserable, and (what is equivalent to being one of thy servants) full of trust in thee, seeking help from thee alone, and thou art rich in goodness and forgiving mercy towards those who are thine. This goodness and compassion of God is the proper *ground of hope*, comp. ver. 15; the piety and trust of the Psalmist merely denote the condition of its development.—Ver. 14 forms a commentary upon the "protect my soul" of ver.2. In reference to חסיד comp. at Ps. iv. 3.[a]—The "I *draw* my soul to

[a] On "who trusts in thee," Calvin: "We know that some were endued with that measure of integrity that they have obtained among men the praise of the highest

thee," in ver. 4, is to be considered as understood with marks of quotation. It forms the beginning of Ps. xxv.—The "forgiving," in ver. 5 is related to the "good," as the species to the genus: God would not be good if he did not forgive to his people their sins of infirmity.

Ver. 6–10.—Ver. 6. *Accept, O God, my prayer, and attend to the voice of my supplication.* Ver. 7. *In the day of my calamity I cry to thee, for thou wilt hear me.* Ver. 8. *There is none like to thee among the gods, O Lord, and there is nothing like thy work.* Ver. 9. *All the heathen whom thou hast made shall come and worship before thee, O Lord, and give the glory to thy name.* Ver. 10. *For thou art great and doest wonders, thou, O God alone.*—The plural feminine from תַּחֲנוּנוֹת, which does not elsewhere occur, is one constructed by the Psalmist for the purpose of imprinting still more distinctly upon the word the character of weakness and entreaty.—In ver. 7, assurance of being heard is given as the basis of the cry to God in trouble: *for* thou shalt hear me, certainly not: would that thou wert willing to hear me. The *basis* on which this confidence rests is given in ver. 8–10, in the reference there made to the glory and omnipotence of God: no man can hinder his work, &c.—Before ver. 8, according to this remark, *for* is in reality to be supplied. The verse reads literally: there is not (a God) as thou (art) among the gods, and there are not (works) as (are) thine. The fundamental passages are Ex. xv. 11, "who is like thee, O Lord, among the gods," and Deut. iii. 24, "where is there a god in heaven and upon the earth, who does according to thy works and according to thy great deeds. On "among the gods," Calvin: "Should any one assert that it is unseemly to compare God to the empty fictions, the answer is easy, the discourse is accommodated to the ignorance

equity: as Aristides boasted that he had given occasion of grief to none. But because these men, along with the excellency of their virtues, were either filled with ambition or so inflated with pride, that they trusted in themselves rather than in God, it is not wonderful that they paid the penalty of their vanity; just as in reading profane histories we foolishly wonder how it happened that God exposed honourable, grave, and self-denying men to the multitude of the wicked; whereas trusting to their own virtue, they despised in their sacrilegious pride the grace of God. For whereas their virtue was the idol which they worshipped, they did not condescend to lift their eyes to God. Therefore although we maintain a good conscience, and God can be appealed to as the highest attestator of our innocence, yet if we desire his aid, we must cast our hopes and our cares upon him."

of men, because we know how daringly superstitious men raise their whims above the heavens. David casts contempt in a forcible manner upon their stupidity, inasmuch as they manufacture gods which in no way are attested to be gods." That thus, "among the gods," is to be understood as if it were "among the *imaginary* gods," is clear from the 9th verse, where even the heathen belong to the works of God, whose gods therefore have no domain left them on which to exercise any power. In the parallel passages, Ps. xviii. 31, "for who is God save the Lord," 2 Sam. vii. 22, "there is no God besides thee" (in a preceding clause as here: there is no God like thee), divinity and therefore existence is denied to all other gods.—In ver. 9, for the purpose of intimating the transcendant greatness of God, it is mentioned that at a future time all the heathen shall serve him; comp. Zeph. ii. 11, "and men shall worship him, every one from his place, all the isles of the heathen," Zech. xiv. 9, 16, and the Christol. on the last passage. How should such a God not hear the supplication of his servant! The expression, "whom thou hast made," *incidentally* refers to the ground of the hope of the future conversion of the heathen. To be and not to be conscious of being cannot always continue apart; the creature must necessarily, at a future period, return to a state of obedience to its Creator. Comp. Ps. xx. 28, where the announcement that the heathen shall, at a future period, do homage to the Lord, is founded on the fact that he alone is lawful King of the earth. We here see what a fulness of prophetical matter, and of joyful expectation of the dawning of the day of knowledge, even in the midst of the dark night of error which covered the earth, was furnished by the sound doctrines in regard to the *creation*, which meet us, as it were, at the very threshold of the sacred Scripture. The expression, "whom thou hast made," ought always to lift us to blessed confidence, as often as the state of the world before God, falls heavily upon our souls. The *proper* basis of the confidence, however, is given in ver. 10. God, God *alone* is great, and does wonderful deeds, and this his greatness manifesting itself in wonderful deeds, cannot but produce a lasting impression. The heathen shall at a future time come and honour his name, the product of his deeds. The hammer of the greatness of God will break the rock of their hearts.

Vers. 11–13. But the Lord has given to the Psalmist (O that he did but lay them to heart) special pledges of acceptance and deliverance. He has already brought him once from death to life: how should he not now prevent his death! The Psalmist not merely as one considering, but as one *praying*, makes mention of the former favour of God, and his heart is full of confidence.—Ver. 11. *Teach me, O Lord, thy way, I will walk in thy truth, incline my heart that I may fear thy name.* Ver. 12. *I will praise thee, O Lord my God, with my whole heart, and honour eternally thy name.* Ver. 13. *For thy grace has been great towards me, and thou didst deliver my soul out of deep hell.*— "Teach me thy way, O Lord," in ver. 11, is borrowed word for word from Ps. xxvii. 11. As the quotation here is undoubtedly designed, the way of the Lord must have the same meaning here which it has there—viz., his *guidance, the way of salvation* along which he leads his people. The Psalmist had already, in fulfilment of the prayer of Ps. xxvii. 11, learned this way externally, but he prays, judiciously applying the sense of Ps. xxvii. 11, that the Lord would teach him *inwardly* also, still more perfectly this way, would lead him heartily and fully to appreciate the grace which had been vouchsafed to him as being the only ground on which hope can grow. The *truth* of God is always the truth (comp. Ps. xxx. 9) which belongs to God, the agreement between word and deed as manifested in the experience of his people, never the truth which he desires, and which is well-pleasing to him, or faithfulness towards him; comp. at Ps xxv. 5. *To walk* in the truth of God signifies, according to the fundamental passage, Ps. xxv. 3, to be always mindful of it. David had there represented walking in the truth of God, as the condition of deliverance. He is tenderly reminded of this here by the sons of Korah. They pray out of his soul; as thou hast led me in thy truth, Ps. xxv. 5, as thou hast richly manifested this in my experience, so may I also turn to my own words (Ps. xxvi. 3), walk in it, meditate on it with my whole heart. That *the fear of the Lord*, for which the Psalmist prays in the last clause, is reverential gratitude for the manifestation of the glory of the Lord in his experience, is evident, not only from the second clause, but also from the first clause of ver. 12, which may be considered as a commentary on the expression. The *fear* here corresponds to the *praise* there. The fear of the name of the

Lord exists already in the Psalmist's heart, but he feels that it is not there *in a perfect state;* he prays to the Lord, therefore, that he would *unite* his heart to fear his name, *i. e.*, that he would fill it in all its parts with reverential gratitude, that he would entirely remove from him the intervening ground between the torrid and the frigid zone; comp. "I will praise thee with my *whole heart*," in ver. 12, Ps. xii. 2, James iv. 8.—Ver. 13 points more distinctly and clearly than the preceding one, to the mighty deliverance in the *time of Saul*, with allusion to Ps. lvi. 13, where, in a Psalm of David's, composed at this time, we read: "for thou hast delivered my soul from death, so that I walk before God in the land of the living;" comp. also Ps. xviii. 5, "the cords of hell compassed me about, the snares of death surprised me." It is impossible to translate with Ew. "the deepest hell," but only "the under hell," or "the hell deep below;" comp. Deut. xxxii. 22.

Ver. 14–17: the developed prayer.—Ver. 14. *O God, the proud rise against me, and the band of the violent stands against my soul, and they do not set thee before their eyes.* Ver. 15. *And thou, O Lord, art a God, compassionate and gracious, long-suffering, and of great mercy and truth.* Ver. 16. *Turn thyself to me, and be gracious unto me, give thy strength to thy servant, and help the son of thine handmaid.* Ver. 17. *Perform to me a sign for good, that those may see it who hate me, and be ashamed, because thou, Lord, assistest me, and comfortest me.*—Ver. 14 is copied quite literally from Ps. liv. 3. The effect in David's case must have been very striking, when those very same words were here put into his lips in this new distress, which had been used by himself so nobly on a former occasion. The "violent," who at that time sought after his soul, were now at rest in their graves. The most remarkable of the variations (these always occur in such cases), is that זדים, *proud*, occurs instead of זרים, *strangers, barbarians* (comp. at Ps. xix. 13), and instead of the *violent, the band of the violent*, the plural form being retained, which points back to the original text. The *conspiracy* of Absalom is more exactly indicated by this expression than by the mere word violent. Even the *Elohim* is transposed from the original passage in which the Psalmist removes his refuge away from the earth, where he is defenceless,

to heaven, flees to God that he may undertake for him in opposition to men.—In ver. 15, the Psalmist turns back once more to the *basis*. He holds up before God the great comforting expression which had been made use of in Ex. xxxiv. 6. "*Towards thine own*" must be supplied; comp. ver. 5.—*The son of an hand-*maid, ver. 16, is a home-born slave; comp. Ex. xxiii. 12. As it is incumbent upon the servant that he serve the Lord, it is the duty of the Lord to *help* and protect the servant.—The *sign* which the Psalmist asks in ver. 17, is a matter-of-fact attestation of the divine favour. Neither the sense of the word nor the connection admits of a miraculous sign. What the Psalmist speaks of, according to the preceding context, and the conclusion of the Psalm, is simply *help* and *comfort*, by which his enemies may see, that it is not without good ground that he calls God *his* God. *For good, for prosperity*, comp. Ps. xvi. 2. In the last words (not, *while* thou helpest me, in this case the tenses would not be preterites), the Psalmist grounds his prayer upon *confidence*, with an expression of which the Psalm appropriately closes. The preterites are to be explained by the strength of the faith which anticipates the future.

PSALM LXXXVII.

Zion, the much valued city of God, is protected and honoured by him, ver. 1–3. The fulness of the heathen shall one day enter into it, find in it their true home, and all the fountains of their salvation, ver. 4–7. Ver. 1–3, the contents of which are general, are to be considered as forming the introduction. The main thought is that contained in ver. 4–7, the glorifying of Sion by the reception of the heathen into the number of its citizens; and a well-defined form and arrangement of this thought forms the proper kernel of the Psalm, viz., "Sion, the *birth-place* of the nations," which occurs in every one of the three verses (4–6), which are bounded by a Selah behind and before.

The formal arrangement is, upon the whole, easily discerned; the number seven of the verses is divided by a three and a four. (Ver. 7, as far as the main idea is concerned, is intimately connected with ver. 3–6; it contains the praises of Sion as sung by

its new citizens.) If we search deeper, it is manifest that the *numbering* pervades the *words* as well as the verses. The whole is grouped round the 4th verse, which stands in the middle, and contains twelve words. The three preceding verses have the numbers 7, 7, 5, and the three following verses have exactly the same (in ver. 5 the אִישׁ וְאִישׁ is considered as one word, and in like manner the יֻלַּד-בָּהּ). If we consider the 7 and the 5 as the broken 12, the whole becomes characterised by the 7 and the 12, the signature of the covenant, and of the people of the covenant. The seven is, according to common rule, divided by the three and the four. Everything here agrees too harmoniously together to admit of the arrangement being the result of chance. The view is one of considerable importance in more respects than one. Thus it attests the originality of the Title in ver. 1, and, consequently, of the titles generally; for the title forms part of the artificial structure of the Psalm, a structure which falls to pieces as soon as the title is removed. In like manner it sets aside arbitrary attempts, such as that of Ewald, who magnanimously endeavours to cover over out of his own resources, the pretended defect at the beginning of the Psalm. And it also explains, adequately, the very concise form of expression throughout the Psalms which certainly looks like one, the words of which had been numbered.

The title furnishes no means for expounding historically the Psalm. For the song of the Sons of Korah, to whom it is assigned, was heard at very different times. Yet an historical exposition is demanded by the contents. For hopes such as those here expressed, suppose some actual occasion by which their flame, always glimmering under the ashes, might be kindled up in the soul of a *prophet*, or of a *Psalmist* who is *particularly* dependent upon such actual occasions. These actual occasions are of a twofold character: either the depth of misery, the sad contrast between the idea of the people of God, and their appearance, which powerfully constrains heaven-enraptured souls to seek compensation in the future, and opens their spiritual eye to behold the glory pointed out to them by God, (this is the history of the Messianic prospects immediately before the exile, during it, and shortly after its close), or some great present *salvation*, in which the believing soul sees a prelude and a pledge of the *perfection* of

salvation, and by which it is lifted up to the active exercise of hope in regard to it. The spirit and tone of the Psalm render it manifest that it was an occasion of the latter kind, as at Ps. lxviii. lxxii., that existed in the case before us; the former is, generally speaking, rather prophetic than lyric; poetry is dependant upon the popular tone of mind, and is drawn forth by it, while prophecy corrects it. The whole character of the Psalm agrees with the title, which designates it a *Song of Praise.* There are no traces of tears recently dried up in the clear countenance of the Psalmist, as there were, for example, in that of Jeremiah, when he began to sing the song of Israel's deliverance. Triumphant joy pervades it from beginning to end.

If we endeavour to define more closely the historical occasion, every thing leads us to the joyful events *under Hezekiah.* We cannot fix upon an *earlier* time. For before this time Babylon could not have been named, as it is here, as being, next to Egypt, the representative of the power of the world. Its rising grandeur became first known in the time of Hezekiah. In the forty-eighth Psalm, which was composed by David, Egypt and Cush still appear, ver. 31, 32, as the representatives of the might of the world: in Asia at that time it had no adequate representative. Further, the name *Rahab, haughtiness, pride,* by which Egypt is here designated, occurs for the first time in Is. xxx. 7, in a prophecy belonging to the time of the Assyrian oppression under Hezekiah, and this passage is undoubtedly the fundamental one on which the others, the passage before us and Ps. lxxxix. 11, depend,—the name does *not* occur in Is. li. 9, 10: comp. at Ps. lxxiv. 13. Isaiah indicates pretty clearly that he is the author of the name, when he says: therefore I *call* it Rahab. And in like manner, we cannot come down to a *later* time. The deliverance under Hezekiah is the *last* great joyful event previous to the captivity; and the name by which Egypt is here designated forbids us again to descend to a period later than that event. The name "haughtiness," "pride," was suitable only so long as Egypt continued to be a formidable power (and that Rahab is to be explained in this way is manifest from Job ix. 13; xxvi. 12; Is. li. 9; comp. at Ps. lxxiv. 13, besides Is. xxx. 7); the word is never applied to a *ferocious aquatic animal, a sea monster;* by the battle at Karkemish or Circesium on the Euphrates, the

haughtiness of Egypt was humbled, its pride was broken. The name appears, indeed, in Ps. lxxxix. 11, but only in reference to the haughtiness and pride of the *past*, the incarnation of which was Pharaoh in the time of Moses: but here the allusion is that even this still haughty and proud power shall take upon itself the yoke of the Lord,—Rahab,—Egypt, with all its haughtiness and pride.—Further, it is evident from Ps. xlvi., lxxv., lxxvi., which were all composed at this time, that the Psalm-poetry received a mighty impulse from the events under Hezekiah, and was at that time awakened out of its long slumber. The first of these Psalms, like the one now before us, belongs to the sons of Korah, and shows that these men at that time were found among the organs by whom the joy of inspired men and the confidence of the people received their adequate expressions. This Korahitic Jehovah-Psalm is intimately connected with that Korahitic Elohim-Psalm, not only in spirit and tone, which it possesses in common with Ps. xlvii. and xlviii., the ancient models after which the Korahitic Psalms of the time of Hezekiah were composed, but also in particular expressions, such as the praise of Zion (comp. Ps. xlvi. 4, 5, with ver. 1–3 here), the name "*the city of God*," which is given to it here (comp. ver. 4 there with ver. 3 here), and the words, "he establishes it," here in ver. 5, and there in ver. 5. —If we suppose the Psalm to have been composed on the occasion referred to, it will appear quite intelligible that the Psalmist should break out so suddenly at the beginning with praise of the *security* of Sion: he merely lends his mouth in this case to the full heart of the people; verse second also, "The Lord loveth the gates of Sion more than all the dwellings of Jacob," is seen in its true light, for this preference for Sion was at that time *verified*—its gates remained closed upon the enemies, while all the rest of the country was subject to their sway,—the heart alone remained uninjured. In like manner, also, the expression in ver. 5, "He establishes it, the Most High," receives its foundation.—That time also was peculiarly well-fitted to develope the germ of the *main-idea* of our Psalm, the hope, namely, which always slumbered among the people, of the conversion of the heathen to God and to his kingdom. The ancient promise, "In thy seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed," had at that time found a prelude of its fulfilment. The common enemy of the human race had been cast to the

ground for the sake of Sion; the heathen shared in a blessing which was in the first instance imparted to her. That they were not wholly *hardened* against this favour, but that they responded to the exhortations of Asaph, "Let them bring gifts to the Dreadful One," Ps. lxxvi. 12, is evident from 2 Chron. xxxii. 23, "And many brought gifts to the Lord to Jerusalem." What time could be better fitted than this to awaken the hope of the future conversion of the heathen?—*Finally*, if we assume the occasion referred to to have been the correct one, a surprising light is thrown upon the enumeration of the nations, which thus is saved from the appearance of arbitrariness. The nations enumerated are only such nations as were bound up in community of interest with Israel at that time and are hence the same as the "many" of Chronicles. The *Egyptians* formed always the chief object of attack to the Assyrians, and were severely threatened by Sennacherib. The *Ethiopians* at that time were closely bound up with the Egyptians (comp. Rosellini i. ii. p. 105), and Torhaka, king of the Ethiopians, was, according to Is. xxxvii. 9, in the train against Sennacherib. The king of Babylon, whose rising power the spiritual eye of the prophets had already before this time beheld in the fore-ground of the future, and whom they had represented to themselves as the heir of the decaying Assyrian (comp., for example, Is. xxxix. 23, 17; Micah iv. 10), sent a present, after the Assyrian catastrophe, to Hezekiah, and sought to enter into closer terms of friendship with him. Isaiah, in chap. xiv. 29, threatens the Philistines with dreadful misery from the Assyrians, and it is evident, from chap. xx. 1, that this threatening was fulfilled.—Rich *Tyre* would, in all probability, come in next after Judah.—Thus, therefore, every thing unites in favour of the assumption of the composition at the time referred to, in favour of which it may still be added that some passages remind us very strikingly of Isaiah.

Title. *By the sons of Korah, a Psalm, a Song of Praise.* Ver. 1. *His founded (city), upon the holy mountains.* Ver. 2. *The Lord loves the gates of Sion more than all dwellings of Jacob.* Ver. 3. *Glorious things are said of thee, thou city of God.*—The suffix in יסדתו, ver. 1, refers not to Sion, which every where throughout the Psalm is plural, but to *Him* of whom the soul of the Psalmist, and of the people at that time, was so full

that every one would immediately think of him, even when he was not expressly mentioned, the Lord; comp. ver. 2 and 5, and Is. xiv. 32, liv. 11, where the *founding* of Sion by the Lord is, in like manner, mentioned. We cannot translate: *his founding*, for the noun יסודה never occurs; it must be: *his founded (city)*, as a simple participle. The founding of Sion took place in a *spiritual sense*, when it was chosen to be the seat of the sanctuary; comp. the being born used of the spiritual birth in ver. 4–6. It was at that time that the place, though it had previously existed, received its true foundation. It is better to supply "*is founded*," out of "his founded city," than to insert the mere "is:" comp. יסד with ב of that on which it is founded in Is. liv. 11, "I will found thee on sapphires." As in other passages Sion is always spoken of only as the holy mountain of the Lord (comp., for example, Ps. ii. 6, xliii. 3), and as the Psalmist, throughout the whole Psalm, has to do, not with the whole of Jerusalem, but only with Sion, Mount Sion here also must be understood as alone meant. The Psalmist speaks of *mountains*, because Sion is one part of a mountain *range*, comp. Robinson ii. 15. The whole was indebted for its dignity to this particular part. The sanctity of the mountain range, of which Sion formed the kernel (the remaining portion was merely the shell) denoted its separation from all the other mountains of the earth, its inapproachable character, its impregnable security against all the attacks of the world. For this sanctity it was indebted to the choice of God, fixing it as the seat of his church upon the earth. The mountain is holy "as the mountain which the Lord chooses for his seat," Ps. lxviii. 16. The praise which is here bestowed upon Sion belongs peculiarly to the church of God upon the earth. As it belonged to Sion only in so far as it was the seat of the church, so it belongs to the church only in so far as it is really the church.—On the expression, "The Lord loveth," in ver. 2, comp. Ps. lxxviii. 68. The *gates* are specially mentioned because it was against them that the assaults of the enemies were in the first instance directed. If they remained safe, the whole city was safe: comp. Is. lx. 18. —"There is spoken," in ver. 3, stands instead of "men speak." The נכבדות is the accusative; comp. Ewald, § 552. The form of expression is designedly general: by God, by man, among Israel, among the heathens, Sion gets glorious praise. *Glorious:*

because the Lord protects thee, wonderfully maintains thee, shall at a future time wonderfully increase thy citizens; comp. the glorious praise of Sion in Ps. xlviii. and xlvi. which may serve as a commentary. *Of thee*:—comp. on דבר with ב of the object Ew. § 521, 8. We may also translate, "*in* thee," the glorious things of God's wonderful protection and blessing upon thee; comp. Ps. xlviii. 3, "God is known in her palaces for a refuge." "Thou city of God" (comp. Ps. xlvi. 4, xlviii. 1) contains the ground of the fact that there is said something glorious of Sion or in Sion.

Ver 4–7.—Ver. 4. *I announce Rahab and Babylon as those who know me, behold Philistia and Tyre with Cush: this one was born there.* Ver. 5. *And of Sion it is said: every one is born in her, and He establishes her, the Most High.* Ver. 6. *The Lord shall count in the writing down of the nations: this one was born there. Selah.* Ver. 7. *And singers and dancers:* "*all my fountains are in thee.*" At the time when these hopes were expressed, the number of the members of the kingdom of God had been very much melted down. The ten tribes had already been led away into captivity, and Judah remained alone in the land. In these circumstances the longing after the fulfilment of the old promises of a posterity to Abraham as numerous as the stars of heaven and the sand of the sea, must have been awakened with peculiar power, and must have seized with especial ardour upon every thing, such as the above mentioned events in the time of Hezekiah, which furnished a foundation on which such a hope could rest, and brought into view a compensation for the loss of Israel in the coming in of the heathen. In like manner in the present day, the melancholy condition of the church among ourselves makes us look with earnest longings towards heathen lands, and observe every sign which intimates that the Lord will there collect new members for his church. In the first half of ver. 4, the *Lord* speaks, and from the second half to the end the Psalmist; for it will not do to suppose that the Psalmist begins with "and" in ver. 5. The difference, however, is one purely formal, so that it would scarcely be proper to read the address of the Lord with inverted commas. The Psalmist who speaks in the spirit of the Lord, merely continues what the Lord had begun. The הזכיר is to mention, to announce, as Ps. xx. 7; xlv. 17; lxxi. 16;

lxxvii. 11; Jer. iv. 16. The לידעי is *as my knowers, such as know me,* like יצא לחפשי *to go out as a free man,* Ex. xxi. 2. On *to know the Lord,* compare at Ps. xxxvi. 10; Isaiah xix. 21 is parallel: "And the Lord shall be known to the Egyptians, and the Egyptians shall know the Lord in that day." The translation of Gesenius must be rejected: I will make them known to my (old) acquaintances. For the mere announcement is not sufficient; the quality must be pointed out. Is. xix. 19, &c., is, for example, really parallel, where Egypt and *Assyria,* instead of which we have *here* Babylon on the ground already mentioned, serve the Lord, and Israel is third in the covenant; and also Is. xliv. 5, "this one shall say I am the Lord's, and this one shall call himself by the name of the God of Jacob, and this one shall subscribe with his hand unto the Lord, and surname himself by the name of Israel." After "behold Philistia and Tyre with Cush," we must supply: this shall be said by them; compare מדבר in ver. 3, and יאמר in ver. 5. This supplementary clause is indicated by the quotation given of the *words* which these utter: this one was born there. Tyrus had already been named in Ps. xlv. 12, as among the nations which shall in future times turn to the Lord and his kingdom. The Berleb. Bible: "The Syrians had already furnished workmen and materials for Solomon's temple, as a good type that they also would join in the fellowship of the Church of New Testament times, of which the Canaanitish woman formed the first fruits." On the conversion of the Cushites, compare Ps. lxviii. 31; lxxii. 10. Berleb: of which the eunuch of Queen Candace, Acts viii. 27, was the first fruits. "This one" does not refer to individuals, but to the ideal persons of the nations who had formerly been spoken of, and with whom the Psalmist has throughout to do; compare particularly, "when the people shall be recorded" in ver. 4. The "being born" stands here in anticipation of the New Testament doctrine of the second birth in a spiritual sense: besides the passage before us, it occurs only in Job xi. 12, "and the vain man shall be wise, and the wild ass born a man." Sion is the birth-place of the higher existence of the heathen, their spiritual mother city. They shall be there born anew as children of God and children of Abraham.—In ver. 5. The great favour which the Lord shews for Sion in making her the birth-place and the true home of the heathen, is again touched

upon for the purpose of placing it in connection with a *second* favour, that namely of strength and maintainence. It is in this connection, that what is new and advanced in the thought lies. Calvin: "It often happens, that in proportion to the rapidity with which cities rise to distinguished eminence, is the shortness of the continuance of their prosperity. That it may not be thought that the prosperity of the church is of such a perishable and transitory nature, it is declared that the Most High himself will establish her. It is not surprising, as if it had been said, to find other cities shaken, and subjected from time to time to a variety of vicissitudes; for they are carried round with the world in its revolutions, and do not enjoy everlasting defenders. But it is the very reverse with the new Jerusalem, which, being founded upon the power of God, shall continue when even heaven and earth shall have fallen into ruins." On אמר with ל compare iii. 2; lxxi. 10. We may also translate here, "*to* Sion," although in point of form the address is not directed to Sion. The איש ואיש is to be considered as one noun, and signifies *each and every one* (comp. Esth. i. 8; Lev. xvii. 10, 13),—man is added to man, nation to nation, comp. at ver. 4. *He*, he himself and no other, not a weak *human being*. The Most High—comp. Ps. xlvii. 2. —In ver. 6, which Luther has wholly misunderstood, ספר has its usual sense, *to count*, compare 2 Sam. xxiv. 10, where it is used of David numbering the people. The Lord numbers the nations 1, 2, 3, &c., and in doing so, in assigning in the case of each the reason why he counts it in, he makes the remarks: this one was born there. The כתוב is not a noun (no such noun occurs), but an infinitive: *in the noting down of the people*—not when he notes down, but when they are noted down. The Lord merely *presides* at the taking up of the lists, and intimates who are to be marked down. There lies at the foundation a reference to the usual enumeration and citizen-rolls, compare Ez. xiii. 9, which gave a poor and misreable result as compared with the high expectations and hopes which had been called forth in the church of God at its commencement. There comes at last, however, a numbering which satisfies all these hopes. Whole hosts of nations shall be added to the kingdom of God.—Ver. 7 is so far separated from ver. 4–6, as is intimated by the Selah, as that there is nothing more said in it of Sion as the birth-place of the heathen;

it is so far connected, however, as that the matter spoken of is still the relation of the heathen to Sion. It contains the words with which these new citizens of Sion praise it as the fountain of all their salvation: and *singers and dancers* (at the head of every great procession of the heathen), speak thus: *all my fountains are in thee.* The mention of *singers* and *dancers* leads to a joyful *procession*, in which the redeemed from the heathen, as Israel did on a former occasion after their passage through the Red Sea, Ex. xv. 20, 21, express their gratitude to the Lord and to his church. In such joyful processions the singers here first named occupy the chief-place; compare at Ps. lxviii. 25. What these did with their lips, the ring-dancers expressed in music and by mimicry; compare Ps. cxlix. 3; cl. 4, "let them praise his name in the dance." *As*: the one no less than the other. חלל is a verbal noun from חול, compare מחוללות, the ring-dancers in Jud. xxi. 23, which, according to ver. 21, is to be derived from חול. Ps. xxx. 11, and the example of David, 2 Sam. vi. 16, render it manifest that the ring-dance was not confined to young women, but was also engaged in by men. *The fountains* are the fountains of *salvation* which revive the thirsty soul and the thirsty land; compare Ps. lxxxiv. 6; Is. xii. 3, "with joy shall ye draw water out of the wells of salvation." In Ezekiel, chap. xlvii. there flows a fountain proceeding out of the sanctuary in Sion, spreading the blessings of fertility and life through the wilderness into the Dead Sea, the two emblems of the heathen world. Compare on the representations of the blessings of the kingdom of God by the emblem of a stream, at Ps xxxvi. 8; xlvi. 4. The בך can refer, as in ver. 3, only to Sion: in the Lord and thus in Sion his church, which he has made the depository of all his treasures; compare Is. xlv. 14. Calvin: "Now that we know that whatever has been foretold by the Spirit has been fulfilled, we are more than unthankful if experience superadded to the words of Scripture, does not still more confirm our faith. For it is not possible to say how gloriously Christ by his appearing has adorned the church. Then the true religion which had hitherto been confined within the narrow boundaries of Judea, spread over the whole world. Then for the first time God, who had hitherto been known only by one family, was called upon in the different languages of all nations. Then the world, which had hitherto been

miserably rent in pieces by the innumerable sects of superstition and error, was gathered together into a holy unity of faith."

PSALM LXXXVIII.

The Psalmist, in ver. 1 and 2, prays suppliantly for help; grounds this prayer, ver. 3–9, upon the fact that he is sunk in the deepest misery, and standing on the verge of complete destruction, at the gates of death; and intimates in ver 10–12 that God cannot possibly give over his own people to this. After a short effort at renewed prayer, there follows a representation of the sufferings of the Psalmist, and with this the whole terminates, ver. 13–18.

The understanding of this Psalm is entirely dependant upon the correct view of its relation to Ps. lxxxix. We shall therefore direct attention to this subject in the first instance. Several expositors have noticed that the two Psalms stand intimately connected together;[a] no expositor, however, has sufficiently followed out the traces which have been discovered. We maintain that the two Psalms together, like Psalms ix. and x., xlii. and xliii., and many other pairs of Psalms, form one whole consisting of two parts. 1. The *Title* of Ps. lxxxviii. furnishes more than one reason in favour of this. Its disproportionate length, so very striking, becomes explained at once as soon as it is viewed as belonging to one great whole. *In the next place* it is very striking that the last words of the title, "an instruction of Heman the Esrahite," correspond exactly to the title of Ps. lxxxix., "an instruction of Ethan the Esrahite." By this we are unquestionably led to the idea that the above are the titles of the *two parts respectively*, and that the preceding portion of the title of Ps. lxxxviii. is the title of the *whole*. Finally, the שִׁיר placed, as it were, at the top of the title, is perfectly decisive. We have, on a former occasion, shown that this word does not denote a poem generally, but a song, a song of praise, comp. at Ps. xlii. 8,

a Amyraldus on Ps. lxxxix.: It is common to this Psalm with the last, that although each names its author in the title, these authors are both unknown, and besides in both Psalms there is contained a most vehement lamentation, accompanied with incredible ardour of soul.

lxxxiii. title. Now if we refer the title entirely to Ps. lxxxviii., it is impossible to tell what to make of it. The Psalmist is so completely unmanned by a sense of his misery, that he can scarcely adopt the language of prayer, and certainly not that of praise. On the other hand, if we refer the title to the whole of both Psalms, the term is quite appropriate. Ps. lxxxix. begins, with manifest reference to the title, with the words, "I will *sing* the grace of God," and bears from ver. 1 to ver. 38 throughout the character of a song of praise.[a] This character belongs to the *whole*, as soon as it is recognised as a whole. The introductory and concluding portions, dark in themselves, are illuminated by the light of a centre-sun. And the design of the whole then becomes manifest, namely, to give instruction how, in circumstances of great distress, to gain the victory over despair by praising God. 2. If we separate Ps. lxxxviii. from Ps. lxxxix., it stands alone in the whole book of Psalms. All expositors remark with one voice, that such a comfortless complaint no where else occurs throughout its entire compass. Stier, for example, says: "the most mournful of all the plaintive Psalms, yea so wholly plaintive, without any ground of hope, that nothing like it is found in the whole Scriptures." The fact is all the more striking, that the Psalm begins with the words, "O Lord, thou the God of my salvation," after which one certainly might expect any thing else rather than a mere description of trouble, in which the darkness is thickest at the *close*, contrary to the usual practice, for in all other cases the sun breaks through the clouds at the end, if it had not done so before :—the peculiar feature of this Psalm is that it ends entirely in night. The importance of these facts is obvious from the circumstance that *Muntinghe* has been led by them to adopt the idea that the Psalm is merely a fragment of a larger one—an idea utterly destitute of probability, for we have no such thing as fragments either in the book of Psalms or indeed within the whole compass of the literature of the Old Testament. As soon as the connection between Ps. lxxxviii. and lxxxix. is acknowledged, the difficulty disappears. The Psalmist might, in this case, give free scope in the first part

[a] Ven.: The subject matter of the Psalm, if you regard the largest portion of it, is the celebration of the grace and truth of God, especially in reference to the promise of the perpetuity of the kingdom of David.

to his pain and lamentation, in obedience to an irresistible impulse of human nature, knowing that in the second part the rising sun of *consolation* would dispel all this darkness. 3. The concluding portion of Ps. lxxxix., ver. 38–51, strikingly agrees with Ps. lxxxviii. The situation is the same, that, viz., of one who had speedy destruction before his eyes, who stood at the gates of death. The complaint is as deep and painful here as it is there. Ps. lxxxix. 47, 48, ought especially to be compared with Ps. lxxxviii. 10–12. 4. If we consider both Psalms as one, we obtain, by counting the rich title of Ps. lxxxviii., the significant number *seventy*.

It may be urged against the unity of both Psalms, that in Ps. lxxxviii. it is a private individual who speaks, but in Ps. lxxxix. it is the people, or, according to the idea of others, an oppressed king of the family of David; that in Ps. lxxxix. the sufferings distinctly arise from *enemies*, which in Ps. lxxxviii., even although the assertion of some, "that the Psalmist is ill of a mortal disease," and the assertion of others, "that he is languishing in prison," be rejected, as arbitrary and unfounded, the description of the sufferings is of such a kind that it would apply in general to any great distress. But these remarks, in so far as they are founded in truth, agree perfectly well with the view given above as to the unity of the two Psalms—a unity which is not *indivisible*, but is made up of two parts;—and are consistent with the contents of the titles. The author has constructed the first part of the double whole in such a way, that it may not only serve a sorely oppressed people, but also every individual saint may find in it an adequate expression of his own feelings—an arrangement which is exceedingly natural, inasmuch as in seasons of public distress the individual is too often little else than an image of the whole, and which has many analogies on its side, especially in the prophecies and lamentations of Jeremiah, in reading which one feels often inclined to ask whether the prophet means himself or the people. The Psalmist therefore has carefully avoided every thing which referred definitely and exclusively to the people, and in like manner every thing which might lead to any particular kind of trouble. There does not occur, however, any thing (and only this would be decisive against the unity) which in any measure *contradicts* the reference to the

whole community;—in ver. 8, to which reference has been made, the *acquaintances* are neighbouring nations. After this, as soon as the people only speaks in Ps. lxxxix., every objection is removed. And that it is the people that speaks there, and not the anointed, is clear as day. The promise is there in ver. 20 ss. directed, not as in the fundamental passage 2 Sam. vii. to *David*, but to the *people*. The complaint as to difference between that promise and present experience, is raised, not on behalf of David, but on behalf of the people. The difficulty is this, that the divine favour which, according to the Word of God, the people should have enjoyed through the family of David, had been withdrawn. David, and his Son, the anointed, are throughout spoken of in the third person; the people unquestionably comes forward as different in ver. 17, 18, 50.

If we adopt the unity of the two Psalms, it becomes no very difficult matter to assign the date of the composition of the whole. It cannot have been composed earlier than the times immediately preceding the Babylonish captivity: for the people stand here at the very brink of a precipice. It is even better to refer to the time of Zedekiah, than, with Venema, to the time immediately after the death of Josiah. The Psalm must have been composed before the captivity: for there is no trace of the destruction of the city and temple, which could scarcely have been omitted if it had taken place; the kingdom of David is in a state of depression, and verging towards extreme old age, but still it exists (comp. especially ver. 45 and 51), and the prayer of the Psalmist is, that the Lord would deliver it from impending destruction; according to ver. 43, the anointed of the Lord still carried on *wars*, although unfortunate ones. Assumptions such as those, which refer the composition of the Psalm to the times of the Maccabees, render it necessary to have recourse to the desperate expedient of understanding the expressions, "David," "his son," "the anointed of the Lord," as meaning, not the royal family of David, but the royal nation—an assertion which does not require one word to be thrown away upon it.

The Title runs: *A Song of Praise, a Psalm by the Sons of Korah. To the Chief Musician, upon the distress of oppression.—An Instruction by Heman, the Esrahite.*—The expression, "to the Chief Musician," amounts to a notice that we

have before us a proper church-song. The על מחלת לענות has been already explained at Ps. xiv., vol. i. p. 206. That "of the sickness" is to be interpreted of sickness in a figurative sense as equivalent to severe suffering—a sense in which the word is frequently used, as, for example, Is. i. 5; Ps. liii. Title—is evident from the term which is appended as an explanation, לענות, denoting the afflicting cause: comp. ver. 8, 15, Ps. xc. 15, cii. 23, cxix. 75, or that in which the distress consists of it. If we connect these words with the שיר of the beginning we have a description of the design of the Psalm: to comfort, in severe suffering, by the praise of God. Let us now direct our attention to the special title of Ps. lxxxviii. It bears the name of *Instruction* or a *didactic Psalm* (at Ps. xxxii. Title), and the Psalm gives direction not to allow our sorrows to prey upon ourselves, but to pour them out before God—the A B C of all sufferers. If they follow this direction, they may be again spoken with. He who has learned *to complain* to God, will soon learn *to hope* in God. As the authors of the whole Psalm had already been said to be the *Sons of Korah* (comp. at Ps. xlii.), it is obvious that *Heman the Esrahite,* who is named here, and *Etham the Esrahite,* who is named in Ps. lxxxix. should not be considered as the proper authors of the parts marked by their name, but as men into whose mouths the contents of these parts were put. The ל is here, as in other passages, the ל *auctoris;* but it denotes the *imaginary,* and not the *real* author—a sense in which it may naturally be understood in those cases in which the real author had either been named or otherwise indicated, as in Ps. lxxxvi. The reasons which induced the Sons of Korah to introduce these names of Heman and Etham need not remain doubtful. There is no doubt that these two men were the famous musicians of the time of David, who are so often named next after Asaph. Etham is the same as Jeduthun, who is in several passages named in an exactly similar relation as third next to Asaph and Heman. The attempt which Berthold makes in his Intro. iii. i. p. 1975 ss. to prove them *different* persons, strikes in the opposite direction. Etham is probably the proper noun, and Jeduthun (the *praiseman,* comp. להודות in 1 Chron. xvi. 41, xxv. 3, Ges. on the word), an ideal name, devised by David,—and hence we may explain the variety in the form: comp. Ps. xxxix. Title. These

men were not at all ordinary musicians: they were also, what they must have been to enable them to be founders of the sacred music, divinely inspired sages. In 1 Kings iv. 31, it is said of Solomon: "And he was wiser than all men, than Etham the Esrahite, and Heman, and Kalkol, and Dardah," and in 1 Chron. xxv. 5, Heman is called "the king's seer in the words of God." Both, however, were not *composers of Psalms.* The Sons of Korah were at this time desirous, on the one hand, of honouring their own poem, and of strengthening its impression by prefixing to it the names of these celebrated men next after their own, and, on the other hand, of perpetuating the memory of these men, who appeared to such disadvantage, compared with their "brother" (1 Chron. vi. 24) Asaph, who is so often named in the titles of the Psalms;—they wished "to raise up seed" to the childless and sages. In doing so, they had the example of David before their eyes, who, in Ps xxxix. Title, had named Jeduthun for the purpose of honouring him, and handing his name down to posterity, not indeed as the author, but as the chief musician (comp. at the passage), and also the example of their ancestors, who had on several occasions sung from the soul of *David:* comp. for example, Ps. xlii., xliii,, lxxxiv., lxxxvi.—Heman is here, and Ethan in Ps. lxxxix., called the *Esrahite.* We learn the import of the term in 1 Chron. ii. 5, "and the sons of Serah: Simri, and Ethan, and Heman, and Chalcol, and Darah" (we have the same names in 1 Kings v. 11, with the unimportant difference of Dardah instead of Darah). The ז is hence an *Al. prothet.*, and Ethan and Heman were named Esrahites, because they belonged to the family of Serah, the son of Judah, which they adorned by their famous names. It is certain that they were not the *descendants* of Serah, the son of Judah. The whole music connected with the worship of God in David's time, and in later periods, was in the hands of Levites; and this every child knew, so that nobody could think of tracing the descent of the famous chief musicians of David to the tribe of *Judah.* Heman, according to the express and well-defined intimations given in 1 Chron. vi. 18 ss., xv. 27, was a Levite of the family of the Kohathites, the grandchild of Samuel, whose spirit passed over to the "seer in the words of God," through his son Joel; Ethan, according to 1 Chron. vi. 29-32 (comp. xv. 17, 19) was a Levite

of the family of the Merarites, a son of Kisis, 1 Chron. vi. 29, or, according to another form of the name of Kusaja, xv. 17,[a] as Asaph, according to 1 Chron. vi. 24–28, was a Levite of the family of the Gershonites. Hence Heman and Ethan could have been reckoned as belonging to the family of Serah, only in the sense that they dwelt in this family, as "strangers and sojourners" (comp. Jud. xvii. 7), and were incorporated with it, as citizens. And there are not wanting examples of Levites being spoken of as belonging to the family of which, in their capacity as citizens, they formed part. Thus Samuel the Levite, 1 Sam. i. 1, is called an Ephraimite; and, in Jud. xvii. 7, there follows immediately after the words "of the family of Judah," the remark, "who was a Levite, and he sojourned there;" comp. Beitr. P. iii. p. 60. Heman and Ethan were hence adopted sons of Serah's, who brought him, however, more honour than did all his real children. From the above induction it is clear, that *Movers* on Chron. p. 237, was too precipitate in finding the accounts of Heman and Ethan to be contraditory accounts, which are quite consistent with each other, when rightly understood, and that Keil on Chron. p. 164, and Gesen. in his Thes. under Heman, were, in like, too precipitate in denying the identity of the persons in the different passages.

It is not possible to discover any formal arrangement extending throughout both Psalms; and any forced attempts to do so are the less called for, as these Psalms, which are of great length, do not require, in accordance with the usual practice, any such arrangement; comp. at Ps. lxxviii. The Psalmist has satisfied himself with including the whole within the remarkable number 70, and giving to each separate part an artificial arrangement, in which the numbers 7 and 10 play the chief parts. Thus the main division in Ps. lxxxviii. consists of seven verses, which are divided into a four and a three, ver. 3–9, and 10-12.

Ver. 1, 2.—Ver 1. *Lord God, my saviour, I cry in the day time, in the night before thee.* Ver. 2. *Let my prayer come before thee, incline thine ear to my cry.*—On the "my salvation-

[a] In 1 Kings v. 11, Ethan and Heman are called sons of Machol. There is, however, no contradiction between this and the notice given in Chron. Machol is not a proper name; it never occurs as such; we must translate: sons of the dance; *Heller: skilful in leading down the sacred dance:* comp. "daughters of music," Eccl xii. 4.

God," Calvin: "In thus addressing God he lays bridle and bit on the excess of his pain, he shuts the door of despair, and strengthens himself to carry the cross." The extremely concise character of the second half of the verse is explained by the circumstance, that the words are *numbered* for the purpose of intimating beforehand the 7, as the signature of the whole Psalm. The two clauses are to be supplemented from each other; in the first, *before thee;* and in the second, *I cry*. The fundamental passage is Ps. xxii. 2: "My God, I cry in the day time and thou answerest not, and in the night season and I am not silenced." According to this passage the יום here must stand for יומם, or ביום. It certainly does not occur thus in any other passage, but there are many analogies in its favour (comp. Ew. § 492), and the short form might the more readily be used here as בלילה follows. Forced translations, such as "at the time when I am during the night before thee," are foundered by the fact that יום in parallel in לילה can only mean *day*.[a]

The Psalmist grounds, in ver. 3–9, his petition that he may be finally heard in the prayer which he unceasingly addresses to God, without having hitherto obtained any answer, upon the greatness of his distress. Ver. 3. *For my soul is filled with suffering, and my life is near to sheol.* Ver. 4. *I am reckoned with them that go down to the grave, I am as a man to whom there is no strength.* Ver. 5. *Among the dead free, like the slain, who lie in the grave, whom thou rememberest no more, and they are cut off from thy hand.* Ver. 6. *Thou hast laid me in the lowest pit, in dark places, in deeps.* Ver. 7. *Thy wrath lieth upon me, and thou hast afflicted me with all thy waves. Selah.* Ver. 8. *Thou hast removed my acquaintances from me, I am shut up and do not go out.* Ver. 9. *Mine eye languisheth because of misery, I cry to thee, O Lord, every day, I stretch out to thee my hands.*—Instead of "my life stretches to sheol," in ver. 3, Ps. cvii. 18, has "to the *gates* of death." The first clause of ver. 4 is from Ps. xxviii. 1, with the change of נמשלתי

a On "before thee" Calvin: "Nor is the particle, *before thee*, superfluous; all men alike complain in their grief; but this is far from pouring out their groans *in the presence of God:* nay, they must seek some hiding-place where they may murmur against God, and find fault with his severity; others utter openly their clamorous words. Hence we see what a rare virtue it is to place God before us, and to direct to him our prayers."

into נחשברתי. *With them, i. e.*, as them, or like them. *The men without strength* (*not is strength*, for *to whom there is no strength*, Ew. § 608), are, according to the connection, *the dead*. It is only on this interpretation that we can explain the *as*. The Psalmist was already *without strength*; but he is rather exactly like a dead than like a living man on the brink of the grave.—In "free among the dead," in ver. 5, the Psalmist overlooks the small difference which still exists between him and the dead, and reckons himself among the latter, as he does also in ver. 6; ver. 4, and the remaining portion of ver. 5, shew that the sense is, "already as good as dead, and, therefore, free from thee." Freedom, in connection with earthly relations, is, generally speaking, a great good. Yet, with good human masters, there have been cases in which the slave did not choose to avail himself of the freedom to which the divine law entitled him; comp. Deut. xv. 16, "I will not go out from thee, because I love thine house, and I am happy with thee." But, with the heavenly master, *freedom* is pre-eminently an evil; to be the servant of God is the highest happiness; comp. Ps. lxxxvi. 16. For his service is joy, because his yoke is easy and his burden is light, his commandments are more precious than gold, yea, than much fine gold, are sweeter than honey and the honey comb (comp. the praise of the divine commandments in Ps. xix.); and, what is of special consequence here, God gives to his servants a great reward, Ps. xix. 12; he not only *demands service* from them, he also *cares* for them with tender fatherly love, feeds them at his table, and holds his protecting hand over them; comp. Ps. xxiii. Over against these rich blessings, which the service of God brings with it, there is the mere naked freedom remaining for those who have been removed from the service of God—a poor thing. Allusion is made, as is obvious, to Job iii. 19, "and the servant is (there in the world of spirits) free from his master;" it may be a fortunate thing to become free from an earthly master, but to be free from the heavenly master is assuredly misery. Great difficulty has been experienced in interpreting the words before us. Hence have proceeded such translations as: among the dead is my couch, or among the dead I am sick, weak, or laid prostrate. The etymology is decidedly against this: the sense of *freedom* is the fundamental and the only sense of the root חפשׁ in He-

brew (Hävernick on Ez. xxvii. 20). In Ez. in the above mentioned place בגדי חפיט is "glorious coverings;" comp. 1 Sam. xvii. 25, where חפשי, which generally denotes not the "set free," but the "free man," signifies a "free lord;" magnificence cannot be wanting. In 2 Kings xv. 5, 2 Chron. xxvi. 21, בית חפשית or חפשות is a house of *freedom*, a house where the lepers dwelt, those who were likened to the dead, struck off from the roll of the servants of God. This is manifest from the remark which follows in Chron.: "for he, Uzziah, was cut off from the house of the Lord," had lost his place there where all the servants of the Lord dwell (comp. at Ps. lxxxiv. and the parallel passages), in consequence of which Uzziah lost his command over his fellow-servants, which was handed over to his son Jotham. This strikingly harmonious parallel passage furnishes the *second* proof in favour of the above translation. The *third* lies in the expression, "those whom thou rememberest no more, and who are cut off from thy hand," which agrees remarkably well with the first clause as understood by us, and serves to explain it exactly as in the above quoted passage of Chron., "to dwell in the house of freedom," is explained by "to be cut off from the house of the Lord." The comparison with *the dead* is followed by that with the *slain*, because the Psalmist was threatened with *violent* deprivation of life. "To be cut off *from the hand of God*," his helping and protecting hand, is to be made away with in a violent manner, in consequence of violent destruction to be no longer the object of God's helping grace; compare at the parallel passage, Ps. xxxi. 22, "I am cut off from thine eyes," cut off, and consequently withdrawn from thy gracious look. We have already, at Ps. vii. 5, adverted to the idea which lies at the foundation of the whole verse that the *dead* are no longer the objects of the loving care of God. In Old Testament times it had a mournful truth. The darkness of the intermediate state previous to the appearing of Christ, had not yet been illuminated by the morning of divine grace—the *paradise* of which the Lord spoke to the thief was first opened up at his death—the intermediate state under the Old Testament was indeed not distinctly known as such; the clear view of the resurrection was first opened up by him who is the resurrection and the life. It was under the New Testament that it was first said of the grave: "it is to me a chamber where

I lie on roses, because by thy death I conquer death and the grave." The servants of God at that time could not but shudder when they stood immediately over the abyss of death and looked into the utter darkness, "the darkness of death without order."—*The grave of deep places*, in ver 6, is sheol, deep under the earth, compare on בור of sheol at Ps. xxviii. 1, the "lower places of the earth," in parallel with "sheol," in Ps. lxiii. 9, Ez. xxvi. 20, and "the lowest hell" in Ps. lxxxvi. 13. The "dark places" are as usually (compare at Ps. lxxiv. 20) the dark places of sheol. The Psalmist, a living corpse, is as good as brought to that place. On במצלות, in other passages מצולות water-deeps, compare at Ps. lxix. 2.—The "waves" in ver. 7 are the tumultuous sea-waves of trouble and pain, compare at the fundamental passage, Ps. xlii. 7. The משבריך is the acc. according to thy waves—with them, compare Ew. § 485. The *Selah* is appended to ענית, in order to give prominence to that word which is intended to explain the title. The want of the suffix, otherwise strange, may also be accounted for by a reference to this explanation.—The complaint of the estrangement of acquaintances and friends in consequence of suffering, ver. 8, meets us frequently in the Psalms, compare at Ps. xxvii. 10; xxxviii. 11; lxix. 8. (Job xix. 13). What is true of *personal* is also true of *national* relations; like causes produce like effects. The expression, "thou hast made me an abomination to them" (the plural has an intensive force—as it were a whole assemblage of abomination) alludes to Gen. xliii. 32, xlvi. 34, (compare Ex. viii. 22), according to which Israel was an abomination to the Egyptians, and therefore contains a slight intimation of a national reference. The last words, "I am shut up and do not go out," must necessarily be considered as referring to the *acquaintances*, and cannot be viewed in connection with a reference to Lam. iii. 7, 9, "shut up by *misfortune*, I can find no way of escape," but "shut up by public reproach, which keeps me in the house like a prisoner, I do not go out, I stir not from the door," with reference to Ps. xxxi. 11, "they who see me in the street flee from me," and especially to Job xxxi. 34, where Job is expressing his *willingness* to suffer in case of his guilt what he must now suffer unwillingly, says, "I should be afraid before a great multitude, and the contempt of families should terrify me, and I will be silent and not go out of doors."—On

דאב in ver. 9, compare Deut. xxvii. 65. Instead of "the eye," Luther without any reason has the "person," compare at Ps. vi. 7; lxix. 3. On "I stretch out my hands," Arnd: I sigh with my heart, pray with my mouth, and supplicate with my hand, like a child which stretches out both its hands to its mother."

Ver. 10–12. The Psalmist, who is now within one single step of death, represents to God, that if he delay any longer to help him, he will deprive himself of the possibility of manifesting his glory to which his very being prompts him, and of the praise of his own people, which is very pleasant to him, compare at Ps. vi. 5. For it is to the living only and not to the dead that he can shew wonders; and it is the living only that can praise him:—"Make haste therefore and help me, *ere I go to the land of darkness when I shall be lost to thee.*—Ver. 10. *Wilt thou then do wonders to the dead, or will shadows stand up and praise thee. Selah.* Ver. 11. *Will thy mercy be recounted in the grave, thy faithfulness in destruction.* Ver. 12. *Will thy wonders be known in darkness, and thy righteousness in the land of forgetfulness.*"—That God cannot shew wonders to the dead (ver. 10) is a strong reason why he should, while his people are still in life, manifest on their behalf his wondrous power. The existence of the Christian church furnishes a mighty proof that he has done this; the maintenance of Israel in a time when every thing seemed to proclaim entire destruction, proceeds on the supposition that he does this. The מֵתִים stands collectively, compare at Ps. lxxvii. 11. The mention of *wonders* points to the national reference of the Psalm. The *Rephaim* were a Canaanitish giant-race, whose name was applied to the shades of the lower world. Contact with these is something terrible for the sufferer; the spirits of the deceased are represented to the imagination as possessed of a gigantic form, compare 1 Sam. xxviii. 13, where the witch of Endor, on the appearance of Samuel, says, "I behold Gods ascending out of the earth." Beitr. ii. p. 261. Against other attempted derivations it may be urged that they do not explain the fact, that this term applied to the dead is only used in *poetry;* that it is in the highest degree improbable that a word written exactly similar should have two derivations and significations; and רָפָא signifies to heal and nothing else, and that it is altogether foreign to the Hebrew to consider Rephaim a term applied to the shades

as bearing an agreeable sense. The קום is not to be considered as signifying *to raise again from the dead*, (that would be contradictory to the true doctrines, which is never done in the Old Testament) but *to rise up*, compare Ps. lxxviii. 6. The language refers to what takes place in death, not *after* death. The יודוך also could scarcely want the copulative. The Selah gives God as it were time to weigh the weighty reason, and then the development follows.—In the grave and in *destruction*, ver. 11, = in the place of destruction, sheol, the mercy and the faithfulness of God could not be praised so much as by his own people on earth, when he manifests these graces in delivering them from impending death (compare at Ps. xxx. 9), partly because of the want of opportunity for its manifestation, and partly because of the want of ability to praise him.—The "land of forgetfulness" in ver. 12, is not the land where one is forgotten (Ps. xxx. 12), but the land where one forgets, Luther: "where one remembers nothing," compare Eccl. ix. 5, 6–10, "there is no work, nor device, nor knowledge, nor wisdom in the grave." God does no wonderful works to the dead, because they would not be known by them. The great wonder of the resurrection is not excluded, because the language used applies only to those wonders which are performed to such as remain in a state of death. And that the Psalmist does not acknowledge this, is not to be explained by "the difference between seasons of faith and despondency in the human soul which is found existing even in the present day." For it is a *didactic* poem that we have here before us. Such a poem may descend very low to suffering; but it must always remain above it.

Ver. 13–18.—Ver. 13. The Psalmist, in ver. 13, prepares for prayer, makes even an effort at it in ver, 14, and soon sinks back, ver. 15–18, into lamentation, which reaches its summit in the last words.—Ver. 13. *But I cry to thee, O Lord, and in the morning my prayer shall anticipate thee.* Ver. 14. *Why, O Lord, dost thou cast off my soul, hidest thy face from me.* Ver. 15. *I am miserable and ready to expire from my youth. I bear thy terrors. I will despair.* Ver. 16. *Thy wrath goes over me, thy terrors annihilate me.* Ver. 17. *They surround me like water the whole day, they are round me altogether.* Ver. 18. *Thou hast removed from me friend and neighbour,*

mine acquaintances—the place of darkness.—"In the morning," in ver. 13, denotes the great earnestness in prayer: comp. at Ps. v. 3, lvii. 8. The קִדַּם is to surprise, comp. at Ps. xxi. 3.—On ver. 14, Calvin: "Although these lamentations at first sight exhibit expressions of pain without any consolation, they nevertheless contain tacit prayers. For he does not proudly contend with God, but mournfully desires some remedy to his calamities." On "why dost thou cast off," (comp. Ps. xlii. 2), Arnd: "Thus it is when the cross lasts long, conflicts arise about casting off. But there is no casting off; there is only a waiting for the hour of help, the hour of the Lord."—In ver. 15th, there is no reason for departing from the usual sense of נְעוּר *youth*. (Luther falsely: that I am thus cast off). When a great affliction befals us, we cannot regard it as standing alone, we look upon it as the last step of a ladder, which we began to ascend as soon as we came into the world, so when we meet with any great *deliverance*, we think upon all the mercies which we have experienced from our youth. In the funeral hymn: "And now I have ended life's hard course," we read: "In every year from tender youth, I have learned how hard's the road to heaven." Israel, who must first occur to our thoughts, says, in Ps. cxxix. 1, in language which corresponds exactly to the clause before us," "they have oft oppressed me from my youth up." The oppression in Egypt befel Israel in his youth (comp. Hos. xi. 1) in consequence of which he was brought to the very verge of destruction, so that he might with truth say, "I am miserable and *ready to expire* from my youth," just as the antitype, the Lord who was born in a stable (= Egypt), was soon sought after by Herod (= Pharaoh) that he might be put to death, and was exposed to the danger of his life on many occasions on the part of his enemies. The *terrors* of God are the terrors which he sends. The אִפּוּנָה is from פּוּן, to *despair*, to *expire*. The form has its usual sense. The Psalmist is so far gone that he *resolves* to give himself over to despair, to give up that opposition to it which he cannot any longer maintain.—In ver. 16, the form צְמָתְתוּנִי, which nowhere else occurs, is formed out of the Piel, which occurs elsewhere, by the Psalmist himself, for the purpose of alluding to the צְמִיתוּת of Lev. xxv. 23, "the land shall not be sold for *annihilation* (so that the right of the possessor shall not be wholly annihilated) for the land is *mine*, for

ye are strangers and sojourners with me." God appears—this is the force of the allusion—to be failing, contrary to his own law, inasmuch as he is completely alienating his property, so that the possibility of redemption is excluded.[a] —In ver. 18, the usual translation is: my acquaintances are darkness, *i. e.*, have disappeared. But we must rather, with J. D. Michaelis and others, explain: my companions—the place of darkness *i. e.*, the dark kingdom of the dead is instead of all my companions, has come near to me, while they have gone back. The following considerations may be adduced in support of this:— מחשך signifies always, even in Is. xxix. 15, xlii. 16, not *darkness*, but a *dark place*, and it occurs in this sense, and is even applied to the darkness of sheol in ver. 6; according to the usual translation, the ver. does not close with a thought of sufficient strength, but with merely a flat repetition of ver. 8, whereas, according to our translation, the Psalm ends with an energetic expression of its main thought—the immediate vicinity of death—the darkness is thickest at the end, just as it is in the morning before the rising of the sun; and, finally, there is a strikingly parallel passage in Job xvii. 14, "I call the grave my father, and the worm my mother and sister."

PSALM LXXXIX.

The Psalmist, in language of joy and praise, calls to remembrance first the promise of God which secured the perpetual existence of the royal family of David, and consequently the preservation of the people, ver. 1–37, then complains that the present state of matters forms a sad contrast to this promise, ver. 38–45, and finally prays to God that he would remove this contrast, ver. 46–51. In reference to other introductory matter, compare at Ps. lxxxviii.

Ver. 1–4. The Church resolves that she will eternally praise the mercy and the faithfulness of the Lord, because these shall

a Ewald takes another view: he, however, has nothing except a false rendering of Hos. iv. 18 to refer to in support of his view of the import of the form. That passage should be translated: they love the "prayer," as a description of their insatiable avarice, which always puts "give" into their mouth.

eternally be manifested to the family of David, and through that family to the people, in virtue of the promise which God gave to David that he would eternally defend his family, eternally maintain his throne.—Ver. 1. *I will sing eternally the mercies of the Lord, I will make known with my mouth thy truth from generation to generation.* Ver. 2. *For I say: eternally shall thy mercy be built, the heaven—thou maintainest thy truth in it.* Ver. 3. "*I have made a covenant with my chosen one. I have sworn to David my servant.* Ver. 4. *For ever I will maintain thy seed and build thy throne from generation to generation.*" *Selah.*—The *mercies* of the Lord, ver. 1, are, according to the context, especially the manifestations of his love towards the family of David, (compare ver. 49, and "the mercies of David," Is. lv. 3), and the *faithfulness* of God is that by which he fulfils these promises made to this family. The determination to praise *for ever* these manifestations of the love and faithfulness of God, shews that it is not one single individual that speaks, but the congregation of the Lord, convinced of its own eternal duration. It is the work of *faith* to go forth on the supposition of eternal duration at a time when every thing visible proclaims near destruction, and to give expression to the determination to praise for ever the love and the faithfulness of God at a time when every thing appears to declare that he has changed his love into hatred, and has broken his promises. The עולם here and in ver. 2, 37 is for לעולם, compare at Ps. lxi. 4.—The determination to praise for ever the mercy and the faithfulness of God is founded on the conviction that these will stand the trial. Ver. 2. *Mercy* appears here under the figure of a building in continual *progression*, in opposition to one which is left unfinished and falls into ruins. The *faithfulness* is established in the heavens, in order that it may partake of their eternity, be like them eternal; compare ver. 36, 37, on the eternity of the heavens at Ps. lxxii. 5, and a similar figurative expression, Ps. cxix. 89, "thy word stands fast in heaven." The heavens have emphatically the foremost place assigned to them in the collocation of the words. —In ver. 3 and 4, the foundation of the firm hope of the eternal continuance of the mercy and the faithfulness of God is the promise of God to David in 2 Sam. vii.; in reality we ought to supply "for thou didst say." This promise, on which see

the remarks made in this commentary at Ps. xviii. 28–47 (vol. i. p. 310–323), upon which also Ps. xxi., lxi., cxxxii., lxxii., cx., depend, forms the proper *centre-point* of the Psalm. It is merely alluded to here shortly and summarily, but it is entered upon at large in the 19th and following verses. As surely as this promise culminates in Christ, so surely is it significant to us, comp. at Ps. lxi.; and we may learn from this Psalm not only in general how in the church's most troublous times we may conquer that fear with which the visible aspect of affairs fills us, by clinging to those promises which the Lord has given her, but may also be ourselves comforted with that consolation which is administered here to the Old Testament Church. The promise of God to David extends to all ages, even to the end of the world.[a]

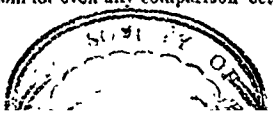
In a promise every thing depends upon the person who promises. The question therefore occurs: has he the will and the power to fulfil the promise? and where it is men who promise, the answer to this question is never very consolatory, often very mournful. Hence the Psalmist, before unfolding farther the contents of the promise, proceeds in ver. 5–18 *to praise the glory of God*, especially *his omnipotence and faithfulness*. This independent portion of the Psalm is very artificially arranged. The whole consists of 14 verses. The praise of God is completed in 10, ver. 5–14. To this there is added a declaration as to the happiness of the people who have such a God, ver. 15–18. The ten is divided into a three and a seven,—the introduction and the proper treatise. The three of the introduction and the four of the conclusion make up a seven, which corresponds to the seven of the main division. The unbroken seven is enclosed within the broken one.

First, ver. 5–7: The omnipotence and faithfulness of God are devoutly praised even by the angels, his heavenly congregation.—Ver. 5. *And the heavens praise thy wonders, O Lord, and thy truth in the assembly of the saints.* Ver. 6. *For who in the*

[a] On "I have sworn," Arnd: "who does not see here how great is the friendship and how faithful is the love which God bears to man, and how deep the lofty majesty of God condescends when he swears to man? And why does he do this? In order that he may make his promise sure, that he may strengthen our faith and help our weakness;—so desirous is God that we should believe on him and not doubt his promise. In Heb. vi. such causes are assigned. O blessed people, for whose sake God swears! O miserable people, who will not believe God even when he swears!"

clouds is like to the Lord, who comes like to God among the sons of God? Ver. 7. *God is very terrible in the confidence of the saints, and dreadful for all who are round about him.—And the heavens praise*, ver. 5:—and therefore it is clear of what mighty importance, what a precious treasure, this promise is, the author of which is praised even by the angels, (not *wherefore* or *truly*). Ps. xxix. 1, 2, is a parallel, and in all probability the fundamental passage, where in like manner the praise of God by the angels appears as an evidence for the infinite greatness of God. *Heaven* is in opposition to *earth*. The *second* clause shews that it comes into notice in regard to its inhabitants, the angels. The *wonders* are named as works of *omnipotence;* comp. ver. 8, where we have as here *wonders* and *faithfulness*, *might* and *faithfulness*. In the second clause "they praise," must be supplied from the first. The angels have, as in the fundamental passage Deut. xxxiii. 2, 3, the name of the "holy ones," *i. e.*, the sacred and the glorious (comp. at Ps. xxii. 3), for the purpose of pointing to their *dignity*, which serves for a basis on which to lay the glory of God, to whom they are devoutly subordinate. The holy ones in heaven stand opposed to the weak mortals of earth whose praise has not much to say. The expression, "the *assembly* of holy ones," points to the congregation of God upon the earth, which, in its weakness, sings his praise.—In ver. 6, 7, the fact that even the holy ones praise God, is grounded on the infinite superiority of God above the most glorious creatures.[a] In ver. 6, שחק cloud, the singular only here, and in ver. 37, in other passages, שחקים is employed poetically for the heavens. On the *Bne Elim*, sons of God: comp. at Ps. xxix. 1. The agreement in this very singular expression, shews that the Psalmist had this passage distinctly before his eyes. The thrice repeated Jehovah, also, in ver. 5 and 6, is assuredly designed.—In ver. 7, the אל stands in reference to its appellative sense, *the strong one*. "The *confidence* of the holy ones" (comp. at lxxxiii. 3, lv, 14), denotes the confidential community to whom God vouchsafes to intrust his secrets, Job i. 6, ii. 1, though not his deepest ones, 1 Pet. i. 12. Notwithstanding this, there always remains an infinite dis-

a Ven.; "The duty rendered to God by the inhabitants of heaven is confirmed and illustrated by the infinite superiority and excellence of God, in which he very far excels them, so that there is no room for even any comparison between them and God."



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tance between him and them; comp. Job iv. 18, xv. 15. God does not cease to be, even to his holy ones, the object of *fear*. As the סוֹד is masculine, and does not exactly denote *assembly*, the רבה cannot be an adjective, "in the *great* assembly of the holy ones," but only an adverb, "very much," as at Ps. lxii. 2; comp. מאוד in Ps. xlviii. 1. Those who are *around* God in heaven stand opposed to those who are so on earth; comp. Ps. lxxvi. 11.

Ver. 8–14.—The Psalmist praises first, in general, the might and the faithfulness of God, ver. 8, occupies himself next, in detail, first with the might of God, ver. 9–13, dwelling at the greatest length upon it, because it is at this point that his most painful doubt arises, and afterwards at the close with the *moral* attribute, the *truth* (corresponding to the faithfulness) which forms the conclusion, ver. 14. In depicting the omnipotence of God, prominence is given first, ver. 9, to the dominion of God over the *sea*, because it presents, with its tumults, the emblem of the *power of the world*, by which Israel was oppressed, the Psalmist passing from the figure to the reality, ver. 10; next, the dominion of God over the solid land is adverted to, in opposition to the sea, with which the description had begun; and lastly, the conclusion, ver. 13, consists of a general ascription of praise to God for his power.—Ver. 8. *O Lord, God of Hosts, who is mighty as thou art, O Lord, and thy faithfulness is round about thee.* Ver. 9. *Thou rulest over the pride of the sea, when its waves swell thou stillest them.* Ver. 10. *Thou crushest Rahab, like one slain, by thy mighty arm thou destroyest thine enemies.* Ver. 11. *Thine is the heaven, thine also the earth, the world and its fulness thou hast founded them.* Ver. 12. *The north and the south thou hast created, Tabor and Hermon rejoice in thy name.* Ver. 13. *Thine is a mighty arm, strong is thy hand, high is thy right hand.* Ver. 14. *Justice and judgment are the ground (on which) thy throne (stands), mercy and truth go before thy face.*—On יה, in ver. 8, comp. at Ps. lxviii. 4. The Jah as the concentration of Jehovah, is the more emphatic word. The second vocative, moreover, would have no significance if Jehovah stood. The spirit, impressed with a sense of God, feels the necessity of repeating frequently that name of God, in which his being is comprehended; comp., for

example, ver. 6. The faithfulness of God is *round about him*, surrounds him as his attendants, so that he never appears without it.—In ver. 9, the גאות is not "the lifting up," but the "pride," as "thou rulest" shews; comp. גאות in Ps. xlvi. 3. The figurative expression is chosen with reference to what it represents, the pride of the sea of the people. A reference to this also explains the fact, that in such representations of the omnipotence of God, the subjugation of the waves of the sea is dwelt upon with peculiar delight; comp. at Ps. xlvi. 3, lxv. 7. It has been already intimated in the summary, that the whole arrangement of the clauses of this paragraph can only be explained on the supposition, that the Psalmist regards the sea a symbol of the power of the world.[a] The שׁוא is a noun abbreviated from the infinitive of נשׂא; comp. the שׁוא of Job xx. 6.—From the ordinary sea the Psalmist turns, in ver. 10, to the sea of the nations. He mentions *Egypt* first as a particularly powerful and famous humbled enemy of God and his people in past times; after this, as Egypt got its main overthrow in the sea, the figure and the reality meet together; and after this he turns generally to the enemies of God. By the name Rahab, here applied to Egypt (comp. at Ps. lxxxvii. 4), attention is directed to its appellative sense, *pride, haughtiness*, גאות, which had already been used of the ordinary sea. The expression, "like one slain," is to be considered as equivalent to, so that the proud, haughty person sinks down to the feebleness of a slain man;[b] comp. Ps. lxxxviii. 5.—On תבל *land*, in opposition to sea, as ארץ, earth, in opposition to heaven, comp. at the fundamental

[a] Calvin: "And thus when the world is in a state of the greatest excitement, the Lord can immediately bring all things into a tranquil condition." Arnd: "It is indeed a mighty power on the part of God which holds the sea; and the man who has not seen the sea, has not seen the smallest portion of the power and wonders of God. As now God rules over the sea, he rules also over the whole world, which indeed is a very boisterous sea when the persecutors rise against the church like great waves and billows; but he stills them so that they must not destroy Christ's poor little sheep. Yea, he also rules in our heart; when it is as unquiet and impetuous as the sea, so that the great billows of conflict, trouble, anguish, despair, strike against the heart, then shall we know that the Lord rules over such hellish floods. Therefore in such troubles we should pray: O Lord, thou who rulest over the impetuous sea, art able to render quiet and soft even my little restless heart."

[b] Arnd: "The Son of God has not only slain and laid low the Egyptians, and all outward enemies, but also the hellish Egyptians of our sins, which pursue us in great numbers, and whose captain is the devil."

passage, Ps. xxiv. 1, 2.—Ver. 12 describes the dominion of God over the earth *in its whole extent.* After the *north*, and the *right hand* = the *south*, Tabor lying on the one side of Jordan, and Hermon on the other, can only be considered as representatives of east and west; comp. Ps. xlii. 6. They were well fitted to represent these on account of the manifest traces of the creating power of God which they bear. They *rejoice*, because their very existence is a matter-of-fact praise. *In thy name*,—over it, over the deeds of thy glory which have been done on them; comp. ver. 16, and on "the name of God," for example, at Ps. xliv. 5.—In ver. 13, according to the connection of arm, hand, and right hand, according to "thy mighty arm," in ver. 10, and according to ver. 21, we cannot explain: thine is might with power, but only: thine is an arm with strength, a strong powerful arm.—In ver. 14, מכון is not *foundation, basis*,—this sense is neither ascertained nor suitable; what should it mean? *thy kingdom* stands through righteousness? who would overthrow it then, if God were not righteous?—but as always the *site*, the soil on which the building rests: the dominion of God, is the sense, is situated on the domain of justice and righteousness. The קדם signifies to go before, to come before, קדם פנים occurs in the sense of to come before the face, Ps. xvii. 12, xcv. 2. It is not, therefore: mercy and truth step before thee, or stand before thee, but: they go before thee; comp. at Ps. lxxxv. 13.

Ver. 15–18. Happy the people who have such a God, a God of omnipotence, faithfulness, and righteousness! Salvation can never fail to be imparted to such a people. For this holy and awful God is, as he has solemnly said and sworn, the protection of his anointed one.—Ver. 15. *Happy the people which know the joyful sound: O Lord, in the light of thy countenance they shall walk.* Ver. 16. *In thy name they rejoice always, and through thy righteousness they are glorious.* Ver. 17. *For thou art their mighty ornament, and by thy favour thou exaltest our horn.* Ver. 18. *For our shield is the Lord's, and our King is the Holy One of Israel's.*—At the expression, "who know the joyful sound," ver. 15, we must supply from the preceding verse, "in the presence or before the face of such a God;" who knows to rejoice *to thee*. The *joyful sound* is that which Israel shouted to God, his king and saviour, with the mouth

and trumpets (comp. Num. x. 1 ss.), at the regular periodical festivals, and on extraordinary occasions, such as in war; comp. Num. x. 9, Jos. vi. 5, 20, 1 Sam. iv. 5, 6, 2 Sam. vi. 15, the treatise "on Balaam," at Num. xxiii. 28, where Balaam says of Israel, "the shout of a king is in the midst of him." We are not justified, with many, in limiting the *joyful sound* to the festivals, or in interpreting it exclusively of the sound of the trumpet, comp. at Ps. xxvii. 6. The relation of the two clauses of the verse to each other, as is also the case in Ps. lxxxiv. 4, is that of cause and consequence, not: who walk, but: who shall walk in the light of thy countenance, in the splendour of thy grace; comp. at Ps. iv. 6; xliv. 3; xliii. 3. The face of the Lord is itself the light which brightly illuminates their otherwise dark way. Arnd: "There is great loveliness in the countenance of a joyful virtuous man. There is greater loveliness still in the countenance of an angel. But the highest loveliness is in the countenance of God. Just as parents look joyfully upon their little children, and when they are learning to walk guide them with their countenance and eye, so does the merciful God to those who love him."—In ver. 16, "in thy name," as is manifest from the parallel clause, "through thy righteousness" is to be understood as equivalent to "over it," "over thy glory manifested in guiding them," comp. at ver. 12. The *righteousness* of God is also here that property by which he gives to every one his own, salvation to his people. The ירומו is not "they are proud," but "they are high," "lifted up as the right hand of God itself," ver. 13, comp. "thou liftest up," ver. 17 and Ps. xxvii. 6.—As it is undoubted that תפארת can only signify "an ornament" (comp. Ps. lxxviii. 61, the Christol. on Zech. xii. 7), and עז only "strength," "might," we can only translate in ver. 17: for thou art their mighty ornament; comp. "the arm of thy strength," for "thy strong arm," in ver. 10, "the ark of thy strength," instead of "the strong ark," Ps. cxxxii. 8. The עזמו looks back to תעז in ver. 13. On "thou liftest up our horn," comp. at Ps. lxxv. 10; xcii. 10. The Keri תרום "our horn is high," has been introduced only by an unseasonable comparison of ירומו in ver. 16, and of תרום in ver. 24.—In ver. 18 the confidence which had been expressed in the preceding verses is *grounded* upon the mighty assistance of the Lord. How can he do other-

wise than be surety for him, when Israel's king is his anointed, and Israel's guardian is his guarded one? The ל denotes here, as in Ps. xlvii. 9, "for the shields of the earth are the Lord's," HIM to whom the king *belongs*. The common translation is: for the Lord is our shield, the Holy One of Israel our king. But ל never stands in this way before a nominative, and the thought is not sufficiently suitable, as the joyful confidence in the salvation of God expressed in ver. 15–18 is in this way wholly disjoined from the person of the anointed, around which the whole Psalm revolves. In reference to the appellation of God, "the Holy One of Israel," comp. at Ps. lxxi. 22; lxxviii. 41.

There follows, in prosecution of the subject entered upon in ver. 3 and 4, a more full development in two sections, of the glorious promise made to the anointed, and in him to the people, ver. 19–38. First in ver. 19–28, it is represented that God had promised perpetual deliverance to the people in him, perpetual victory over its enemies, perpetual dominion; and after that the objection is met that this promise may, in consequence of the sins of the anointed, become altogether null: God has already explained that the promise is in its nature an *unconditional* one, that he will punish the sins of his chosen family, but that he will never withdraw his favour from it, and from the people in it, ver. 29–37.

Ver. 19–28.—Ver. 19. *At that time thou didst speak in the appearance (to Nathan) to thy holy ones, and didst say: I have laid help upon a man of war, I have lifted a young man out of the people.* Ver. 20. *I have found David, my servant, with my holy oil I anointed him.* Ver. 21. *With him my hand shall be constant, yea my arm shall strengthen him.* Ver. 22. *The enemy shall not oppress him, and the wicked shall not afflict him.* Ver. 23. *And I beat down before him his opponents, and his haters I will strike.* Ver. 24. *And my truth and mercy are with him, and through my name his horn shall be exalted.* Ver. 25. *And I put his hand upon the sea, and upon the rivers his right hand.* Ver. 26. *He shall also thus address me: Thou art my father, my God, and the rock of my salvation.* Ver. 27. *I will also make him my first born, most high over the kings of the earth.* Ver. 28. *I will perpetually secure for him my mercy, and my covenant shall remain continually with him.*—That the

paragraph ends here, and that ver. 29 belongs to what follows, is evident from the circumstance that there it is the *seed* of the anointed that is spoken of, while here it is only one person that always meets us, the ideal person of the anointed, the royal family of David represented by him.—The "at that time," in ver. 19, connects the paragraph with ver. 3 and 4. חזון, appearance is the term applied to the revelation of God made to and by Nathan in 1 Chron. xvii. 15, comp. the חזיון in 2 Sam. vii. 17. In its original form the promise was directed to David. But it is made very manifest in 1 Chron. xvii. 15, and 2 Sam. vii. 10, that it was intended not only for him but also for the people. This view of the promise, as intended for the people, is the only one that is kept before our eye throughout the whole of the Psalm; and in accordance with this, the people, as the original recipient of the revelation, are termed "thy holy ones," and in harmony with it David, in what follows, is spoken of in the third person. All the old translators, many MSS. and editions give חסידיך in the plural. The singular owes its existence, as in Ps. xvi. 10, to an exegetical difficulty. It was felt to be impossible to reconcile the plural with the application to David or Nathan; and to one or other of these, all interpreters, without exception, down even to modern times, have applied the expression, without observing that in the following part of the Psalm it is the *people* that complains that God does not appear to be keeping his promise, and that it is the *people* that prays that he *would* fulfil his promise. When one goes deep into the root of the matter, the singular is seen to be unsuitable. The address cannot be made to David, for he is never addressed throughout the remaining portion of the Psalm. The Psalmist has given no ground for changing the address, which historically was directed to David through Nathan, into an address to Nathan, so that he should be considered as the person meant by the holy one; it would be considered as a step backwards, inasmuch as the language employed in the Psalm does not refer to a decree of God received inwardly, but to one openly promulgated; and there is, moreover, no ostensible reason why Nathan should be termed the holy one of God. His piety has nothing to do with the matter. The divine revelation made through Nathan first goes backward in ver. 19, 20, to what had *taken place long ago*, the first choice of David by Samuel,

and there is next connected with this in the 22d and following verses, the promise for the future which rests upon this as its basis. The expression "I have laid help" is not to be understood as equivalent to "I have provided help," but it means: I have on behalf of you, my holy ones, laid help upon him, made him the depository of my help, or constituted him a helper; compare Jud. xiii. 5, when it is said of Samson: he shall begin to deliver Israel out of the hand of the Philistines. On the term, "a man of war," compare 2 Sam. xvii. 10, all Israel knoweth that thy father is a man of war. David was a *powerful* young man, (compare Ps. lxxviii. 31, 63.—Luther falsely a chosen one), at the time when his selection became possessed of vitality in his deed of heroism against Goliath. Still we must not limit ourselves to David as an individual. We must rather consider him as the representative of his eternally youthful heroic seed, a seed which reached its summit of perfection in Christ (Jesus = him on whom God has laid help), compare ver. 45.—"I have found" in ver. 20, intimates that the choice of David was not a blind arbitrary act lifting him out of the mass of the people, but a step taken in consequence of a fixed divine purpose. For the sake of impressing this upon the people, God, according to the history of the choice of David, put on the appearance of seeking and finding. The anointing of David with the holy oil was, according to 1 Sam. xvi. 13, the form under which the gifts of the Spirit were imparted to him, which were developed in the most glorious forms in Christ who at the same time was anointed in him.—"With whom my hand shall be established" in ver. 21 (compare ver. 37; Ps. lxxviii. 37), is to be considered as equivalent to "my hand shall be continually with him," ver. 24, 1 Sam. xviii. 12, 14, 2 Sam. v. 10.—In ver. 22 the נָשִׁיא is "to act like a creditor," נוּשָׁה, "to oppress." The second clause is quite literally taken from 2 Sam. vii. 10, "neither shall the children of wickedness afflict them any more as in the beginning." What is there said of the people is applied here to the *anointed*, who receives every thing for the community, and without whom the community receives nothing.—In ver. 25, the *hand* is that which takes possession of any thing. The article in the *sea*, in the *river*, stands generically as in Is. xliii. 2. The sea and the rivers generally are meant as in Ps. xxiv. 2. The Psalmist enlarges the promise, as the language of prophecy had already done,

with special reference to Ps. lxxii. 8, "he has dominion from sea to sea and from the river to the ends of the earth." As decisive against the limited application to the Mediterranean Sea and the Euphrates, may be mentioned the parallel passages already referred to in Ps. lxxii., and in the prophets, the clause, "the highest over the kings of the earth" in ver. 27 and the plural "the rivers," which cannot be explained by connecting the Tigris with the Euphrates, for no such connection ever occurs.—On "He will call me my father," ver. 26, compare 2 Sam. vii. 14, and the investigations at Ps. ii. 7.—The *first-begotten* in ver. 27, as in Ex. iv. 22, where Israel, and Heb. i. 6, where Christ the true David is thus named, is at the sametime the *only begotten*. In the second clause, what is said in Deut. xxviii. 1 (compare xxvi. 19) of the people, "and the Lord thy God make thee higher than all the nations of the earth," is transferred to the anointed in whom and through whom the people were to obtain their lofty destination. Here also we must ascend to Christ, compare Ps. lxxii. 11, 12; it was only a feeble type of the fulfilment that was witnessed in David, compare 1 Chron. xiv. 17.

Ver. 29–37.—Ver. 29. *And I set upon eternity his seed, and his throne like the days of heaven.* Ver. 30. *If his sons forsake my law and walk not in my statutes.* Ver. 31. *If they profane my ordinances and observe not my commandments.* Ver. 32. *I visit with the rod their iniquity, and with stripes their sin.* Ver. 33. *But my mercy I will not withdraw from him, nor break my faithfulness.* Ver. 34. *I will not profane my covenant, and I will not alter what has gone out of my lips.* Ver. 35. *One thing have I sworn in my holiness, I will not lie to David.* Ver. 36. *His seed shall be eternal, and his throne as the sun before me.* Ver. 37. *As the moon he shall be established for ever, and the witness in the clouds is perpetual.*—At the beginning and at the end of this paragraph there is an assurance of the perpetuity of the kingdom of David. And in the *middle* of it, the Psalmist removes every thing which appeared to endanger that perpetuity, by dwelling upon the *one* verse, 2 Sam. vii. 14, what had obtained a very peculiar importance in consequence of the history, the manifest dreadful sins of the family of David, which seemed to imply total rejection.—On ver. 29, compare 2 Sam. vii. 12: Ps. lxxii. 5, 7, 17. The expression as "the days of heaven" is taken

from Deut. xi. 21, where there is promised to the people in case they remain faithful to the covenant, a continuance "on earth as the days of heaven."—In ver. 30 and 31 the strongest possible descriptions of sin are designedly chosen in order to express the thought that the substance of the covenant is altogether independent of human conditions, that even the greatest unfaithfulness on the part of man does not alter the faithfulness of God.—In ver. 32, the words themselves do by no means convey the idea of a *slight* punishment; and neither can this be said of the fundamental passage, 2 Sam. vii. 14, "if he (the seed of David his race) errs, I will visit him with the rod of men, and with the stripes of the children of men," *i.e.*, with such punishments as all men (because all are sinners) are exposed to, grace shall not remove him from this the common lot of men, he has no commission to sin, contrary to Prov. xxiii. 13, 14, "withdraw not thy son from chastisement, if thou smitest him with the rod he shall not die, and thou shalt deliver his soul from hell." The alleviating limitation is here first given in ver. 33, as it is in the fundamental passage in ver. 15. The alleviation, however, is not to be misunderstood as if it referred to *individuals* contrary to the nature of the thing, and contrary to the history, according to which annihilating judgments did descend upon the rebellious members of the family of David; but the opposition is of the punishment of sin in the individual, and of grace continually remaining to the *family*. We must not fail to notice that in ver. 33 it is not said: I will not withdraw my mercy from *them*, the sinners, but from *him* the family as such. Now that the kingdom has passed from the *sinful* to the *holy* seed of David, the direct application of this paragraph has ceased. The case provided for in the promise cannot again occur. Still there exist between Christ and his church a case analogous to that between David and his seed. As David's family was chosen in him (compare 1 Kings xi. 36, 2 Kings viii. 19, Is. xxxvii. 35, 2 Chron. vi. 42), so that it always remained in possession of the favour of God, notwithstanding the fall and rejection of many of its individual members, in like manner the church is chosen in Christ and the sins of its members may hurt *themselves* but cannot injure *it*. Notwithstanding the fall of a whole generation, it always flourishes again and under the most inexorable judgments which are not removed by the appear-

ance of Christ, but rendered more severe, compassionate grace is always concealed. —In reference to the שקר with ב in ver. 33, comp. at Ps. xliv. 17.—The חלל in ver. 34 signifies, as it always does, to *profane*. The covenant sworn by God was a *holy* one, comp. at Ps. lv. 20, and "in my holiness" at ver. 35. That is holy which God, the Holy One, *promises, desires*, and has agreed to. "I will not *profane*" refers back to "if they profane," in ver. 31. The second clause rests on Deut xxiii. 24 (comp. Num. xxx. 13), "whatever has gone out of thy lips thou shalt perform and do." God desires, on the part of his people, truth and fidelity towards himself only on the ground of his own truth and fidelity towards them. All the commands of him who has said, "Be ye holy *for* I am holy," are also promises.—In ver 35, the אחת is not *once* (this sense, in this case, would be generally uncertain, and it is still more uncertain whether *once* could be taken as equivalent to once for all), but *one thing*, as at Ps. xxvii. 4,—*if I have anywhere sworn anything to him, I have sworn this.* The thing sworn, and, according to the second clause (on which we may compare Num. xxiii. 19; 1 Sam. xv. 29), the thing to be kept inviolate, follows in ver. 36 and 37. On "in my holiness," (Gesenius, manifestly falsely: in my sanctuary) comp. Ps. lx. 6.—The "before me," in ver 36, is "under the sheltering covering of my favour."—The *constant witness*, in ver. 37, is the moon. As God has connected with his own duration the continued existence of the family of David, so has he, in like manner, given a constant witness which would convict him of unfaithfulness, should he permit this family to fall to the ground. As long as the church of God beholds the moon shining, which no more goes out in darkness than the other witness and pledge, the sun, she may be full of comfort and joy,—he promises to her David life and victory, even though he seems to be laid on his death-bed, and the sons of wickedness shout over him as one already dead. Many expositors give the totally false rendering: the witness in the clouds, God himself is to be depended on:—the still more arbitrary view is not for one moment to be thought of, which refers to the *rainbow*, with which the family of David had nothing to do. God cannot be named as his own witness, and נאמן in parallel with יכון cannot signify "to be depended upon," but only "constant," as in ver. 28.

With the joyful assurance of the everlasting continuance of the family of David, and, therefore, of her own deliverance, the church proceeds to contemplate the actual state of matters at the present moment. (Ps. xliv. 9, and following verses, are exactly similar.) The contradiction between the present state of matters and this assurance gives occasion to the church to utter a painful *lamentation*, ver. 38–45. She soon turns, however, from the lamentation to the *prayer*, ver. 46–51, that the Lord would remove the appearance, of contradiction.—The whole has fourteen verses, the first paragraph twice four and the second twice three (comp. סלה in ver. 48), the four of lamentation is both times supplemented by three of prayer so as to form seven.

Ver. 38–45.—Ver. 38. *And* THOU *castest off and rejectest, art angry with thine anointed.* Ver. 39. *Thou destroyest the covenant of thy servant; thou profanest on the ground his crown.* Ver. 40. *Thou tearest down all his hedges, thou layest in ruins all his strong works.* Ver. 41. *All who pass by rob him, he was a reproach to our neighbours.* Ver. 42. *Thou dost exalt the right hand of his enemies, thou lettest all his foes rejoice.* Ver. 43. *Thou causest also the strength of his sword to turn back, and dost not stand by him in battle.* Ver. 44. *Thou robbest him of his purity, and castest his throne to the ground.* Ver. 45. *Thou shortenest the days of his youth, thou coverest him with shame. Selah.*—It is to be observed that all the objections of the Psalmist are directed to the one point, that the family of David is apparently in danger of *utter destruction*. It is not any thing that had hitherto happened, considered in itself, that disquiets him—all might have happened only in terms of ver. 32—but as foreboding a yet more dreadful future. He is contending only against *appearances*, and knows in God that he is contending only against appearances, yet the contest is, on that account, all the harder; the signs are very threatening, and, were it not for God and his word, he would be forced to regard it as folly still to hope. No difficulty would ever have been felt by expositors with the *lamentation*, if it had been viewed as, what it really is, the basis of the following prayer, and if, at the same time, attention had been directed to the light which breaks in upon its darkness out of the preceding praise of God.—The expression "Thou profanest his crown," in ver. 39, is to be explained by the fact, that the

crown was the official badge of the king, as the anointed of the Lord. There stood also upon it, though in an *invisible form*, what was visible on that of the high priest, "holiness to the Lord," Ex. xxviii. 36, xxix. 6. In reference to לארץ "on the ground," comp. at Ps. lxxiv. 7.—In the first clause of ver. 40, the king appears, under the image of a *vineyard*, whose protecting walls have been thrown down, and in the second, of a city whose fortifications (for this is the proper meaning of מבצר) have been demolished, comp. Job xvi. 14. The sense is: thou hast left him defenceless and helpless. That we cannot translate "Thou breakest down all the walls of his city," is clear from this, that גדרה is never used of the walls of a city, but always of the enclosures of a vineyard or sheep-fold, and also from comparing the parallel passage, Ps. lxxx. 12, "Why hast thou broken down its wall (*i. e.*, the wall of thy vineyard)?" It is quite obvious that this is the *fundamental* passage. In that passage "its wall" (its fence) is an expression for which preparation had been made, as the language used had all referred to the Lord's vine, and allusion had been made to Is. v. 5. The expression in the 41st verse, "all who pass by the way," is also borrowed from the eightieth Psalm. Those quotations in the Psalm before us from the eightieth Psalm, quotations which it is impossible to mistake, show that we formed a right judgment as to the age of that Psalm. Had it referred, according to the assumption of several, to the Chaldean catastrophe, it would have been *later* than the Psalm before us. The sense of *destruction*, ruin, is commonly given here to מחתה. But this sense is not well ascertained, and the ordinary sense, *terror*, is also here very suitable: thou causest his fortifications to be terrified before the enemy, and to be removed; comp. Jer. xlviii. 1, "the fortification is confounded and dismayed."—In ver. 41, "the passers by" are the nations of the Asiatic kings who visited Judah in marching through against the king of Egypt (comp. at the fundamental passage), the *neighbours*, the surrounding nations who, on a former occasion, approached David and Solomon with reverence, and paid tribute; comp. 2 Sam. viii. 2; 1 Kings v. 1; now they despise the anointed of the Lord in his disgracefully degraded condition, comp. Ps. lxxx. 6; lxxxviii. 8.—In ver. 42 the Psalmist complains that the anointed of the Lord missed the fulfilment of the

prayer, "let not mine enemies triumph over me," which appeared to have been secured to him for all eternity. But it is well for him that he derives all the sufferings of the anointed singly and alone from the *Lord*, and considers human enemies only as instruments in his hands. This is the first foundation of the hope of deliverance.—The expression, "thou causest his sword to turn back" in ver. 43, is illustrated by 2 Sam. i. 22, "the sword of Saul returned not *empty*." The sword returns back ashamed when it does not *pierce*. The *rock* or the stone (comp. at Ps. xviii. 2) *of his sword*, is his sword which, according to the promise, ver. 22 and 23, and through means of the *rock of salvation*, ver. 27, should have been unchangeably firm and sure. The whole meaning is: the *edge* of his sword is as it were unaccountably turned away. The צור means always a *stone*, even in Jos. v. 2, 3. —In the first clause of ver. 44, the suffix is to be supplemented out of what precedes, comp. the עניתו in Ps. lxxxviii. 7: thou hast caused him to cease from his purity, thou hast robbed him of his splendour, comp. Ez. xxxiv. 10. The explanation, thou hast robbed from his splendour a *part* of it, gives a flat, and hence in the connection an unsuitable meaning.—"Thou hast shortened the days of his youth," in ver. 45, is equivalent to, thou hast made him, thine anointed, old before the time, whereas according to ver. 19 he should have been eternally young. The *youth* is alluded to as the season of *strength*, comp. Job xxxiii. 25. Old age, as the season of feebleness, here referred to in connection with the anointed, is in other passages spoken of in connection with the church in the same view, comp. at Ps. lxxi. 9, 18, Hos. vii. 9, "Old age whitens his hair, and he knows it not." In Christ the family of David returned to the strength of youth, which had apparently vanished. "Its flesh became again as that of a little child." Several expositors altogether erroneously refer to this or that Jewish king before the captivity, who reigned only a short while. The Psalmist has to do throughout, not with a single individual, but with the whole race.

Ver. 46–51.—Ver. 46. *How long, O Lord, wilt thou hide thyself for ever, shall thine anger burn like fire?* Ver. 47. *Remember how short my life is, wherefore hast thou created all the children of men in vain?* Ver. 48. *Where is the man who lives and does not see death? who delivers his soul from the*

hand of sheol? Selah. Ver. 49. *Where are thy early tender mercies, O Lord, which thou didst swear to David in thy faithfulness?* Ver. 50. *Remember, Lord, the reproach of thy servant, that I bear in my bosom all the many nations.* Ver. 51. *That thine enemies reproach, O Lord, that they reproach the footsteps of thine anointed.*—On "how long—always," in ver. 46, comp. at Ps. xiii. 1; lxxix. 5.[a]—In ver. 47 and 48, the prayer that God would not further withhold his favour from his anointed, and from the church in him, is founded on the shortness of human life, as is the case very often with similar prayers in the book of Job, for example, vii. 6, "remember that my life is a breath, mine eye will not return to see good," xiv. 1, s., comp. at Ps. xxxix., lxxviii. 39. It would be hard if God were to fill up entirely with sufferings, in the case of his own people, the short span of time which man has to live.[b] The first clause of ver. 47 is to be explained: remember, I, what life, *i. e.*, what I have to live, how short my existence is; comp. the fundamental passage, Ps. xxxix. 5, "behold as an hand-breadth thou makest my days, and my life is as non-existence before thee." Some hasty critics would read instead of אֲנִי, אֲדֹנָי; *O Lord.* But the Psalmist is not so prodigal of his addresses to God, and the אֲנִי cannot be dispensed with, more especially as the חֶלֶד, properly *existence*, or *continuance*, does not exactly point out human life. Even in the *fundamental* passage the language used does not apply to human life generally, but to the life of the Psalmist, who speaks *here* in the name of every individual member of the church. In the second clause עַל מָה stands in its usual sense, *why;* שָׁוְא adverbially, *in vain*, as Ps. cxxvii. 1, 2: We should supposed added: as would be the case, wert thou to give

[a] Arnd: "Is it not an odd thing that when we see a fire break out we are terrified and run, and every man looks after what is his own, yet no man will be terrified at the fire of the wrath of God? Whereas every man should rather help to quench the wrath of God by prayer and true repentance, and after this consider that he has a gracious God, and one who is not angry with him. And if this were so it would be well with us all, and the common fire of the wrath of God would be extinguished."

[b] Arnd: Thou wilt be long angry, and our life is so short. And truly, beloved Christians, there is a high, immeasureable, noble way and disposition in the most high God, there is such great long-suffering and compassion with him, that when a man holds up before him his nothingness and his deep misery, he does not punish us as we have well deserved, but thinks, what should I do with poor dust and ashes, why should I be angry with dust."

over man in perpetuity to misery. The expression, therefore, "why hast thou," &c., is in reality as much as "yet will not have been made in vain." Even here the rich background of salvation after death is concealed before the eye of the Psalmist. It must first be made perfectly manifest in Christ.—The *former* tender mercies are those which God manifested to David in the early part of his history, and which were pledges of the future, all the more on this account that God had sworn his favour in perpetuity to David. In the second clause the *former* (tender mercies) are not the object directly contemplated; it is only the idea of the general favour of God that is there placed before the mind.[a]—That the *many nations* in the second clause of ver. 50 are referred to in connection with the *reproach* which they cast upon the people of God is clear from the first clause. But to supply grammatically the reproach from the preceding clause, "*all* (the reproach) of the many nations" is hard and flat:—such a resumption of the st. constr. in a subsequent clause is altogether without example; Job xxvi. 10, to which Ewald refers, has nothing to the point. The Church of the Lord has, as it were, many nations in its bosom (Ps. lxxix. 1), in the reproach which she suffers from them.—Ver. 51 is still dependant upon "remember" in ver. 50. The אֲשֶׁר, is *that*, comp. Ewald § 597. It is emphatically shewn that the enemies of the king, as he is the anointed of God, are the enemies of *God*. The *footsteps of thine anointed* (Ps. lxxvii. 20)—him wherever he goes and wherever he stands.

Ver. 52 does not at all belong to the Psalm, but contains the doxology which concludes the third book. Hitherto the arrangement of the Psalms has presented no difficulty. The first book contains the Davidic Jehovah-Psalms; the second the Elohim Psalms of the *singers* of David, the sons of Korah, Ps. xlii.–xlix., Asaph, Ps. l., then his own Elohim Psalms; the third book, the Jehovah Psalms of his singers, Asaph, Ps. lxxiii.–lxxxiii., the sons of Korah, Ps. lxxxiv. lxxxix. The Elohim-Psalms are designedly enclosed on both sides by the Jehovah-Psalms.

a Calvin: "God had attested the faithfulness of his word by clear proofs, and therefore believers present before him both the promise and its numerous effects."

PSALM XC.

The Psalm consists of two main divisions, one of *meditation*, which is complete in ten, and one of *prayer* in seven. The ten of the first part is divided by a five, the seven of the second by a two and a five. The formal arrangement is simple, is exactly carried through, and is easily seen.

The point from which the Psalmist sets out is furnished by the view which he takes of the transitory and perishable nature of human existence, and the pain with which he contemplates the nullity of life on earth. The Psalmist, or rather the Church in whose name he speaks, meditating upon the distress before God and in his light, is first driven thereby to cling inwardly and firmly to God, who, as the Eternal and therefore the Almighty, is the sole ground of hope for perishable and therefore feeble creatures; inside the narrow boundaries with which our being is enclosed, God alone can protect, help, and gladden: O Lord, thou art a dwelling-place to us, for thou art eternal, but we are perishable, ver. 1–5.

But the perishable nature of man's existence furnishes to meditation another important view: it teaches us the depths of our sinful corruption, and the greatness of the wrath of God against us: death, to which our short existence is a prey, is the *wages of sin*, ver. 6–10.

The prayer of the second part rising upon the basis of the meditation of the first, is first connected with the thought to which prominence had been given in the *second* strophe, (because the prayer to be based upon the *first* strophe is dependant upon the fulfilment of the one to be referred to the *second*): May God grant that we may know his wrath, reflected to us as in a mirror in the transitory nature of our being, in its entire magnitude, and our own sins in all their depths, and that thus we may have a wise heart, which is afraid of sin, and lays hold upon the commandments of God, ver. 11, 12.

After this the *second* prayer rises, ver. 13—17, (it being supposed that the first has been fulfilled), on the basis of ver. 1–5. "Be thou our dwelling place," here, grows out of "thou art our dwelling place," there. May God remove the misery in the miserable, the severe sufferings with which he has oppressed

the short existence of his people, and show himself again *gracious* toward them.

The Psalm is described in the title as a *prayer*. This description shews, as Amyraldus saw, that the kernel of the Psalm is the *second* part, and that the design of the first is to prepare the way for the second, and lay down a basis on which it may rest. For תפלה denotes only prayer in the proper sense, supplicatory prayer; and Delitsch maintains without any ground at Heb. iii. 1, that it denotes "prayer in its widest, most comprehensive sense, all kinds of addresses to God," 1 Tim. ii. 1. It occurs only in the titles of such Psalms as xvii., lxxxvi., cii., cxlii., in which prayer even in point of form constitutes the most prominent part; and even in the prayer of Habakkuk the prophet, the "accept the prayer of our distress" in ver. 2, forms the middle point round which every thing else is grouped. Assuredly the title points to a high privilege enjoyed by the people of divine revelation. The heathen, in view of the perishable nature of earthly existence, can only hang down their hands and utter cheerless lamentations: but the congregation of the Lord lifts up its hands in prayer to the merciful Father on high. Luther: "Although now Moses in the discharge of his duty kills, inasmuch as he shews us sin in connection with its punishment; yet as he calls this Psalm a prayer, he gives us to understand the medicine against death. And in this he excels in two ways all heathen writings. He amplifies death, or represents it as great, and yet so terrifies that he shews at the same time the hope of comfort, in order that those who are terrified may not be brought to despair. . . . He takes particular care so to act as that he may teach men to fear God, in order that when they are terrified before the wrath of God and before death, they may humble themselves before God and may thus be partakers of his grace. For it is impossible that a man be moved to fear God unless the wrath of God be revealed to him, which cannot be except through the revelation of sin." All the fountains of consolation, which Revelation furnishes in view of the transitory nature of human life, are assuredly not opened up in our Psalm. It points only to the grace with which God refreshes his own people within the narrow boundary of this life; and the view *beyond*, full of salvation and grace, remains cut off. This fact is so troublesome to most of the old expositors, to whom

among the moderns we may add Meyer and Stier, that they have made every effort to remove it. But it remains in spite of all these attempts, attempts which cannot be made without destroying the clear train of thought, and, therefore, the practical power of the Psalm. And where is the good reason for endeavouring violently to set this fact aside? The Psalm teaches us many great truths in a forcible and impressive manner both of death and of the grace of God. Death it represents as the proof, exhibited in stern realities, of the fact that God is our only Saviour,—a fact well fitted to lead us to cling closely to him,—and as the wages of sin and the herald summoning us to repentance. It speaks of the grace of God towards those who give ear to the calls of this herald. Why then force upon it another truth of which it *says nothing*, which it does not *deny*, and for which it certainly everywhere prepares the ground out of which it may grow? For the knowledge of God[a] as eternal omnipotence and love is the foundation of the hope of eternal life; it pledges his *power* and his *will* to impart it to his own people. Compare vol. ii. page 52.

The title designates the Psalm as a *prayer of Moses the man of God*. The last designation is no empty title, it points to the dignity of the person as affording a security for the importance of his *word*. Luther: "As one who has such a duty assigned to him by God, so that we should believe in him and in his instructions no less than in God himself." The designation considered in itself may very well have orignated with Moses. Luther: "As when Paul calls himself *the servant of the Lord*, Rom. i. 1, it is not pride but a necessary recommendation of his office." David designates himself in the titles of Ps. xviii. and xxxvi. as *the servant of the Lord*, (compare the remarks made there), and in 2 Sam. xxiii. 1 he calls himself "the man who was highly exalted, the anointed of the God of Jacob." Notwithstanding as this designation does not occur in the books of Moses, so far as they were written by him, but only in the addition made by another hand, viz., the title of the blessing pronounced on the tribes in Deut. xxxiii. 1, (compare the designation of Moses in the mouth of a cotemporary, Josh. xiv. 6), and as the same is the case with

[a] Luther: "But when thou seest that the prophets and other holy men call upon God who is still beyond everything that man can see, wilt thou not see that they by such calling upon God, acknowledge that there is another life after this one—a life either of grace or of wrath."

the corresponding designation, "the servant of the Lord" in Deut. xxxiv. 5 (compare the Beitr. P. iii., p. 158), it is probable, (although the grounds are by means *decisive*), that the title was added by another person.

The paragraph, ver. 13–15, serves to determine more exactly the time when the Psalm was composed. According to it, the people had already sighed for a long time under the pressure of severe *suffering*, and now pray that God at last would change this suffering into joy, and would again make himself known in his glory. This leads us towards the end of the 38 years' punishment in the wilderness. The fulfilment of the prayer lies in the glorious events of the 40th year, and of the time of Joshua.

There are important *internal* reasons which may be urged in favour of the composition of the Psalm by Moses, as announced in the title. The poem bears throughout the character of high antiquity; there is no other Psalm which so decidedly conveys the impression of being the original expression of the feelings to which it gives utterance.[a] There is, moreover, no other Psalm which stands so much *by itself*, in regard to its fundamental tone and peculiarities, for which parallel passages furnish so little kindred matter in characteristic peculiarities. On the other hand, there occurs a series of striking allusions to the Pentateuch, especially to the poetical passages, and, above all others, to Deut. xxxii. (comp. the exposition), allusions which are of another kind than those which occur in other passages in the Psalms, and which do not bear like them the character of *borrowing*. Luther, in the following quotation, intimates that even here the deep seriousness of the lawgiver may be seen: "Just as Moses acts in teaching the law, so does he in this prayer. For he preaches death, sin, and condemnation, in order that he may alarm the proud who are secure in their sins, and that he may set before their eye their sin and evil, concealing, hiding nothing." The strong prominence

[a] Amyraldus: But as this ode is most ancient, so it bears strong marks of the genius and character of antiquity. It is grave, full of majesty and authority, somewhat concise, adorned with various comparisons, splendid with figures, but these rare and little used, and for the understanding of which there is needed an extraordinary attention of mind." Ewald: "The poem has something uncommonly striking, solemn, sinking into the depth of the Godhead. In contents and language it is throughout original and powerful; and as it is undoubtedly very old, it would have been universally considered as correctly derived from Moses, had we known exactly the reasons which guided the collector."

given to the doctrine of *death as the wages of sin* is especially characteristic, a doctrine which is not of frequent occurrence in Scripture, and especially not so in the Psalms, and which is proclaimed as distinctly and impressively as it is here, only in the Pentateuch, Gen. ii. and iii., and in those ordinances of the ceremonial law which threaten death.

The reasons which have been adduced *against* the composition of the Psalm by Moses are of very little weight. The objection that ver. 10, where the length of human life is limited to seventy, or, at the most, eighty years, stands opposed to Deut. xxxiv. 7, according to which Moses reached the age of 120, is disposed of by the remark that Moses, throughout the whole Psalm, does not speak in *his own name*, but in that of *the people*. It is obvious from Deut. xiv. 22, 23, that among the Israelites at that time the exceptions to the general rule, as to the duration of human life, were much fewer than at ordinary times. Koester's assertion that ver. 15 supposes a long period of suffering, and scarcely applies to the Israelites in the wilderness, who rather beheld the glorious deeds of Jehovah, is disposed of as soon as we direct our attention to "that terrible oath with which God struck them in Num. xiv." Eight-and-thirty years spent amidst the gradual destruction of men lying under the curse, were well-fitted to call forth the prayer, "Make us glad according to the days in which thou hast afflicted us, the years during which we have seen evil;" they are sufficient to explain "the melancholy view of life" which here meets us, and the dread earnestness "with which he instructs us of our melancholy necessities;" no glass was more suitable than this for giving a view of the common condition of human life. Finally, the assertion that the Psalm could not have been composed by Moses, because it resembles the other Psalms in language and general poetical structure, is an *a priori* assertion, which may be met, with at least as much force, by another, that Moses, "the fountain out of which all the prophets have drunk divine wisdom," gave at first the tone no less for prophecy, Deut. xxxii. and xxxiii., than for Psalm-poetry.

How little able modern criticism is to erect a new edifice, in room of one which it has arbitrarily destroyed, is evident even here, from the utter want of unanimity among those who doubt the composition of the Psalm by Moses, in determining its age.

According to Ewald, the Psalm is very old, and certainly older than the age of David; according to Hitzig, it is much later; he places it in the year 150 of the Selencidae! Köster and Maurer will have it placed between these two dates, a little after the return from the captivity; on which Maurer very appropriately, and with great simplicity, remarks, "Yet this is very doubtful."

The first part, that of *meditation*, ver. 1–5: the transitory nature of human life points us to God as our only refuge. Ver. 1. *O Lord, thou art a dwelling-place to us for ever and ever.* Ver. 2. *For before the mountains were brought forth and thou didst create the earth and the land, and from eternity to eternity, thou art, O God.* Ver. 3. *Thou turnest man so that he is beat to pieces and sayest: Turn, ye children of men.* Ver. 4. *For a thousand years are before thee as yesterday when it is past, and as a watch in the night.* Ver. 5. *Thou carriest them away as with a flood, they are as a sleep, in the morning it vanishes like grass.*—Ver. 1 contains the theme: we have no other helper and saviour except thee, O Lord; ver. 2–5 its basis. The מעון has only one sense, that of *habitation*, which it maintains even when it is used of the caves and dens of the wilderness; and those translators are far wrong who set aside this expression, which is so peculiar, and must, therefore, have been selected with express design, and supply its place by *refuge*:—in the whole of Scripture the word is applied to God, only here, in Ps. xci. 9, and in Deut. xxxiii. 27, "God is a dwelling-place of old, and underneath are the everlasting arms,"—the feminine form is used there מעונה, the masculine here as at Deut. xxxi. 15. Even in Paul Gerhardt, God is named, "My house in whom I safely dwell." Isaiah iv. 6 shows where the point of comparison lies: "And there shall be a tabernacle for a shade before the heat, and for a place of refuge, and a covert from the storm and from rain." It was probably the houseless wandering of the Israelites in the wilderness which made them sensible of the value of a habitation, that suggested the use of the figure. Instead of "thou *art*," many translators give "thou *wast*," and refer the whole verse to the grace of God which had been enjoyed by the people in early times, and especially by the patriarchs. But this translation is not required either by the preterite, "which often denotes general truths, which are rendered manifest by experience, and

are in this way defined," Ew. § 262, or by the בדר ודר, which is used as frequently of the *future* as it is of the past, comp., for example, Ps. xlix. 11. And *against* it we may urge, first, that by this translation the connection with what follows is destroyed: thou *art* our dwelling-place, for thou art eternal, and, therefore, almighty; but we are transitory, and, therefore, weak and helpless; and second, that it is only in "thou *art* our dwelling-place," that we can find a right basis for "*be thou* our dwelling-place" in ver. 13–17. God is also a dwelling-place in Deut. xxxiii. 27. Finally, at the time of Moses, the history of the people had been too short as yet to admit of the expression, from "generation to generation" being suitable as applied to the past. —Ver. 2 is in reality connected with ver. 1 by the *for*. The eternity of God serves in so far as a basis to the proposition "that he is the only saviour;" as to be eternal and to be God are inseparably bound together. Just as in the following verses the conclusion as to human weakness is silently drawn from the shortness of human life, so here the omnipotence of God is deduced from his eternity. Thus Luther in his day: "If we look at it in a right way, it includes all the properties of the Godhead. For inasmuch as he is eternal, it follows that he is immortal, omnipotent, blessed, and wise." The *mountains* are named first, because of all other created things they give, by their immoveable fastness, the deepest impression of originality; comp. "the eternal hills," in Gen. xlix. 26, "the mountains of old and the eternal hills," of Deut. xxxiii. 15, Num. xxiii. 7, Hab. iii. 6. ארץ *the earth* is in opposition to heaven, תבל *the fruit-bearing land*, (comp. at Ps. xxiv. 1, lxxxix. 11),—a purely poetical word, the corresponding term in the Pentateuch being יבשה—is the opposite of "the *sea*." In regard to ותחוללי, after setting aside the arbitrary change תחוללי, and the altogether ungrounded assumption of Ewald, that "to move in a circle" stands poetically instead of "to be in the state of being born," or "being originated," we have only two remaining explanations, which require to be considered, the one that it is the third person singular, "and the earth and the land were brought forth" (comp. Gen. i. 11, 12), and the other, that it is the second masculine, the address being directed to God, "and thou hast brought forth." In favour of this last we urge that it is only according to it that we see any reason for the difference between ארץ

and תבל—the earth was created by God on the second, and the land on the third day; and the earth is fruit-bearing only as תבל—that in this case, *to be brought forth*, and *to bring forth*, are placed most naturally together, as cause and effect (comp. Deut. xxxii. 18: "the rock that bore thee thou hast despised, and thou has forgotten God who brought thee forth:" God in this passage is, in like manner, termed מחוללך, with reference, in the first instance, to Israel); finally, that, according to this explanation, it is very appropriately implied, that the being of God is not an existence merely, prior to all created things, but is the existence of the creator, prior to that of his creature, and all the more so, that his eternity is here alluded to on account of his omnipotence, which is really associated with it. Comp. Schleiermacher Glaubenl. i. § 67: "the eternity of God is to be understood only as the omnipotent eternity, as that in God, which, along with all that is temporal, limits also time itself." The אל is not to be taken with Calvin, Ewald, and others, as a predicate: thou art God; but like אדני, in ver. 1, as an address: thou art, O God. As in the following verses man's feebleness and helplessness are deduced from the brevity of his life, so, from the eternity of God, his exclusive Godhead is here deduced, just as in Is. xliv. 6, "I am the first, and I am the last, and (therefore), besides me there is no God." If we take אל as the predicate, the whole train of thought is destroyed: thou art our only refuge, for thou art eternal, and, therefore, omnipotent; but we are short-lived, and, therefore, feeble, wholly unable to bring about our own deliverance.—In ver. 3, in opposition to the eternity of God, which renders him fit to be the habitation of his people, we have brought forward the transitory life of men, which drives them, feeble creatures, to this habitation as their only refuge. The דכא, according to most expositors, is a substantive, a poetical term for the "dust," properly *what is beat to pieces*. But as דכא only occurs as an adj. in the sense of crushed, beat to pieces, and as, according to the other construction, one would expect, instead of עד, rather אל, we must rather consider that the "even to a thing broken to pieces," is equivalent to "even to such a condition." Junius has already given: eo usque, ut sit contritus. The expression is exactly analogous: "even to perishing," for "till he comes to the condition of our perishing," in Num. xxiv. 20;

comp. Balaam, p. 190. The "return" of the second clause has its exact meaning assigned to it out of the expression of the first, "thou turnest him back so that he is *beaten to pieces*," and by the passage in Gen. iii. 19 undeniably alluded to here, "till thou return to the dust from which thou wast taken, for dust thou art, and unto dust shalt thou return," exactly as in Ps. civ. 29, "they return to their dust," Job x. 9, "thou wilt bring me to the dust," xxxiv. 15, Ps. ciii. 14. Luther expl ins otherwise, and is followed by Tholuck: "It proceeds on this, that like as men daily die because of sin, so others are daily born always in the same condition as those who have died." But besides the positive grounds which have been adduced on behalf of the translation given above, we may urge the שובו against this view; no return can be attributed to the new generation which comes in the room of the old. Many expositors, and among the last of these Meyer and Stier, explain the words of the return of the spirit of God. But in this case the whole connection of the first part would be broken, and the *prayer* of the second part, grounded upon the *meditation* here, would be unintelligible. According to this, the language here can apply only to the short and perishable nature of man's being. For it is upon it that the prayer there is grounded, that God would not embitter, by extraordinary sufferings, the span of time allotted to man. The objection to our translation, that it is tautological (comp., for example, Ps. cii. 26), and expresses what is perfectly well known, needs no refutation. It is evidently not this that has led to its rejection, but something wholly different, as Stier has openly acknowledged: "Should not Moses, the man of God, have known what is after death? Or if he knew it, is there any other passage in this Psalm in which it is expressed?"—Luther has given more correctly the sense of ver. 4 than most modern expositors: "Moses exhorts us to rise above time, and to look upon our life with the eyes of God, so shall we assuredly say, that all the life of man is scarcely one hour long, even though it last the longest." The "for" shews that the verse serves to ground the assertion indirectly contained in ver. 3, as to the perishable and brief life of man. To man his life appears long; comp. "teach us to number our days," of ver. 12. He who has the number of seventy years before him, supposes that an eternity has been measured

out to him. The Psalmist destroys, with a powerful stroke, such an illusion: "for how short is human life when it is seen with thine eyes, who seest all things as they are, and measurest the extent of our life by a correct standard? To thee a thousand years are what one day is to man, a night-watch. If we lived then, instead of our poor seventy, which, at the best, is all that is measured out to us, a thousand years, what would these be before thee?" This divine estimate of the length of human life is made by all who have looked with a steady and clear eye upon eternity; they cannot sufficiently wonder at the stupidity of those before whom such a short human life stretches out into the infinite; the years dwindle down, in their estimation, to days and hours; comp. the noble poem of J. Neander, "How swiftly passes human life," the most beautiful of all the Christian imitations of our Psalm.—According to the common view, the shortness of human life is shewn by comparing it with the eternity of God, whereas, according to the exposition given above, the eternity of God is noticed only *indirectly*, inasmuch as, just because he is the Eternal, that time which is long to man appears short to him: a thousand years are in *thine* eyes what yesterday or a night-watch is in *ours*. (Bengel: as to a very rich man a thousand sovereigns are as one penny; so, to the eternal God, a thousand years are as one day.) It is decisive against the direct reference to God, that the years are by no means described as the years of God, but it is rather said, as a thousand years *are before* him. Then, on this construction, the "for" also occasions a difficulty, such, for example, as manifestly meets us in Koester's paraphrase: this cannot be otherwise, as thou art alone (?) eternal. The construction, as we give it, is exactly the same as an admonition to measure time, not by the human but by the divine standard, as in 2 Pet. iii. 8, "be not ignorant that one day is with the Lord as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day." The Lord looks upon time with altogether different eyes from those who live in time; what seems long to you is short to him; a divine day is like a thousand human years, and a thousand human years are like one divine day.—The כִּי יַעֲבֹר is "when it passes by,"—the future expressing what is just ending, Ew. § 264. The *night-watch* which fleets past to those who are asleep like a moment, is added, as a second step in the

climax, to the *day* which is spread out at greater length over labour. It is clear that, in ancient times, the night was divided into three watches; in Judges vii. 19, mention is made of the *middle* watch. And Ex. xiv. 24, where the *morning* watch is spoken of, renders it evident that this division existed in the time of Moses.—In the fifth verse the Psalmist proceeds in the description of the transitory nature of human life. The זרם, *to flow as a stream* (in Ps. lxxvii. 17, hence זֶרֶם, *a storm of rain*), is here *to carry away with a stream*, to carry off with the tearing rapidity with which a storm of rain, in conjunction with the flood which it has occasioned, carries away every thing; for, according to the sense of the noun and the verb, the flood must be noticed here, not as in itself, but as the product of a storm of rain; comp. the זרם קיר, "a rain-torrent of a wall," which carries away walls, in Is. xxv. 4. Luther: "It is a fine full figure, by which is illustrated how the whole human family is driven away, as when a sweeping torrent of rain carries every thing before it, one race or generation after another is hurried away like a roaring flood." Jo. Arnd: "When thou seest a torrent sweep past, thus say, behold there my life flows past, and the water which has gone past never returns." Perhaps the Psalmist alludes to the deluge, in which he sees a figure of the common lot of men.—On "they are a sleep," Luther: "We know that sleep is such a thing that it ceases ere we can perceive it or mark it; for, before we are aware that we have slept, sleep is gone and ended. Wherefore truly our life is nothing else than a sleep and a dream, for before we are rightly conscious of being alive, we cease to live." Comp. Ps. lxxiii. 20, "like a dream on awaking," Ps. xxxvii. 6, "only as an image walks man." The *sleep* and the *morning* stand opposed to each other. The expression, "as grass," is incidently thrust in as the medium of connecting the first and the second part of the Psalm. It is taken up again at the beginning of the last clause in ver. 6, and dwelt upon at greater length. The subject in יַחֲלֹף is not the grass (De Wette and others: in the morning like grass which perishes), but the figurative sleep, *man*. Otherwise the clause, "as the grass," would cease to be the incidental expression which alone it can be here, and would form a part of ver. 6. The translation is much more to be rejected; in the morning it is like the plant which

springs up. This destroys the obvious opposition between the *sleep* and the morning (by which the interpretation of the sleep, as the sleep of death, is set aside), and has, besides, against it, the fact that חָלַף, in Kal, has never the sense of *to spring up.* In the only other passage besides the one before us, which Ges. has adduced in favour of this sense, it has been set aside by Delitzsh, Hab. i. 11.

The second section of the meditative part is ver. 6–10: death is the wages of sin. Ver. 6. *In the morning he blooms and—perishes, in the evening he is cut down and withers.* Ver. 7. *For we disappear by thine anger, and by thy wrath we are terrified.* Ver. 8. *For thou settest our iniquities before thee, our secret sins in the light of thy countenance.* Ver. 9. *For all our days are spent in thy wrath, we complete our years like a thought.* Ver. 10. *Our life-time, it lasts seventy years, and if any one by strength, eighty years, and their strength is suffering and wickedness; for it is soon worn out and we flee away.*— On ver. 6, Jo. Arnd: "When thou seest a garden in blossom, it is as if God took a flower in his hand and said, behold this is what thou art, and thy whole life." The subject in חָלַף, יָצִיץ and יָבֵשׁ is also here, as in יִחְלַף in ver. 5, *man*, the figurative flower, comp. Job xiv. 2, "like a flower he withers and is cut down," Ps. ciii. 15, "as for man his days are as grass, like a flower of the field so he flourisheth; for the wind passeth over it and it is gone, and its place knows it no more." The blossom of man is so short that it does not deserve to have a whole member of a verse devoted to it. Hence the expression, "and it perishes," forms, as it were, a part of the first, and is more fully expanded in the second. The translation, "and springs up," is all the less admissible that the springing up must *precede* the blossoming. The יְמוֹלֵל is the Pil. from מוּל. As God is throughout *addressed*, he cannot be the subject; we must consider the verb as used impersonally, comp. 2 Kings xxii. 38, xxi. 36; Ez. xli. 7. In reality, however, God undoubtedly is the agent who cuts down. *To be cut off*, which alone the form of the verb can denote, is more suitable than *to fade*, which several would violently thrust in in its stead, because it points, as does also the "to be terrified" of the following verse, to the *violent* nature of the destruction. In the parallel passages which have been appealed to, Ps. xxxvii. 2, and

Job. xiv. 2, the language in like manner refers to cutting down, and not to fading.—In ver. 7, the Psalmist ascends from the melancholy fact which he had described in the 6th verse to its yet more melancholy cause; that man's life is so short is the consequence of the wrath of God, which he has drawn down upon himself by his sins, comp. Gen. ii. 17; Rom. v. 12. According to the passage before us, the terrible judgments by which those who proudly rebelled against the Lord in the time of Moses, were annihilated (comp., for example, Num. xvi.), are only a reflection and an image of the common lot of humanity; there happened then, visibly and impressively, what is always going on secretly and unobservedly. The wrath of God eats away our life until after a little while it has completely consumed it. It is a remarkable peculiarity of revelation, that in this way it throws the blame of death upon *men;* for verse 8th shows that the wrath of God presupposes and has for its foundation the guilt of men. If we do not see in death the wages of sin, our melancholy existence must necessarily awaken perplexing thoughts of God, and stifle all noble and child-like love towards him. The בלה is to disappear, to be annihilated. *We are terrified,* namely, before that dreadful death which destroys us; compare Ps. civ. 29, and the noun בחלה of sudden death, Ps. lxxviii. 33, Is. lxv. 23.—The expression "thou placest our sins before thee," in ver. 8 stands in opposition to *an overlooking,* either arising from want of *power to observe,* (compare Jer. xvi. 17; Heb. iv. 13), or from want of *hatred of sin,* proceeding from that easy good nature which rationalism ascribes to God. Instead of שת the Keri has the correct reading. In the second clause, the reading עלמנו *our secret, our secret sin,* is better supported than the plural עלמינו, compare Job xx. 11, a reading which the parallel passage alone has introduced. The term "our secret sin," intimates that the domain of sin is much more extensive than that of *human knowledge,* either that of others or our own, and therefore points to the depth of human depravity. Even for the believer, sin has many dark parts, so that even he, in cases where he is not conscious of any guilt, cannot be sure that he is free from guilt, but must wait the judgment of God, "which shall bring to light the hidden works of darkness and render manifest the counsel of the heart," compare Ps. xix. 12; 1 Cor. iv. 4, 5. Luther: "We should by all

means especially mark this saying, that no man can know or see all his sins, especially if you regard the greatness of original sin. And it is no wonder. For who can sufficiently describe the single sin of unchastity which yet is known to every one? How much less can any one sufficiently know other difficult and subtile *spiritual* sins, such as impatience in adversity, blasphemy, and murmuring against God, &c.? O what a deep abyss is unbelief alone! On this account Moses well calls sin a secret thing, whose greatness no mind can comprehend. For as the wrath of God is, and as death is, so also is sin, an inconceivable infinite." The מאור according to most expositors signifies here *light*. But Gen. i. makes a distinction between אור *light* and מאור a *luminary*, and the ascertained sense is here wholly suitable: the luminary of the countenance, because the divine countenance *illuminates* what was concealed, so that it lies clear and open.—The פנה in ver. 9 is to turn round, to turn away, compare Jer. vi. 4. *All our days disappear*, so that it is soon over with our whole life. "Through thine anger" belongs in reality also to the second clause. In this the כלה is not "to bring," but "to bring to an end." The הגה cannot signify a conversation, a tale: for the word always denotes something inward (comp. Gousset in Gesen.), and is never used of a conversation with another. As little can it denote a pure thought, for the noun in the two other passages where it occurs, Ez. ii. 10, Job. xxxvii. 2, stands for something loud, and the verb properly denotes not the pure thought, but what is intermediate between thought and discourse. The Psalmist compares human existence as regards its transitory nature, to a soliloquy which generally bears the character of something transitory and broken. The mind does not advance beyond single half-uttered words and sentences, and soon retires again into the region of pure thought. To such a transitory *murmur* and ejaculation is that human life compared which stupid dreamers look upon as an eternity.—As "the days of the years," in ver. 10, is a phrase of constant occurrence, particularly in the Pentateuch for "a life-time" (comp. Gen. xxv. 7, xlvii. 8, 9), and as ימים also occurs in ver. 9 and 12, for "the whole extent of human life," the idea of Calvin is to be rejected, that "the days of the years" is an emphatic expression, "because though time is divided into small portions, the number it-

self deceives us so that we expect to live a very long time." The remark, however, of Michaelis is correct, "the nominative absolute is not without emphasis, because it calls forth expectation," and also that of Köster, "the expression retarding the current of thought is intended to render prominent the contrast between the apparently numerous days of life, and their short sum at the end." The expression "are in them," is, "they contain the sum of seventy years in them." "And if with strength," is better explained by "if there is any one furnished with strength,—with a particularly strong constitution," than by "if they, the days are furnished with strength." As גְּבוּרָה is also "strength," "power," we must reject such explanations as "if it comes high," (Luther's), and "if very strong." Luther: "Men almost reach this time of life, therefore he sets it down as a common terminus and usual boundary. For what is beyond this is not worth being called a life, because then every thing that belongs to life ceases; men use neither meat nor drink with pleasure, are scarcely fit for any trade or work, and are kept at them only to their torment." *And their pride is only suffering and wickedness.* The רַהַב occurs only here: the noun, however רַהַב occurs in the sense of *pride* in Job ix. 13, xxvi. 12, and the adjective רָהָב *proud* in Ps. xl. 4. The *pride of* the days, that of which they are proud or may be proud, is either the strong period of life—Calvin, "the sense is, that before men sink into old age, and while they are still in the very blossom of youth, they are involved in those many troubles, cares, pains, and anxieties to which mortal life is exposed"— or, the best, the most favourable condition of life, Luther, "when it is delightful." It has been shown in the treatise on Balaam, that אָוֶן always means *wickedness*, p. 112, ss.; Delitzsch, on Hab. i. 3, iii. 7, has opposed this without sufficient ground. Here the wickedness denotes what must be suffered from the wickedness of others, as in the case of Abel from Cain. The confession of Jacob before Pharoah in Gen. xlvii. 19, and also that of Lamech, Gen. v. 29, agree with what is here said as to the condition of human life. Luther: "The whole of life therefore is trouble and labour, with the single exception that these evils are alleviated by faith and hope in the divine compassion in the case of those who have been born again, and are new creatures." *For we are driven rapidly*

away and we flee hence. This affirmation is by no means suitable as the basis of what immediately precedes. We must hence separate it by a semicolon, and connect the "for" with the main subject of the verse. "And their pride, &c.," can be considered only as an *offshoot thought*, the subject of the Psalm being not the *misery* but the *transitory nature* of human life. The גָּז is usually translated, it goes away, it passes away. But as גָּז in the only other passage where it occurs with certainty (Ps. lxxi. 6 is doubtful), Num. xi. 31, (a remarkable connection with the language of the Pentateuch) has the sense of "to bring," "to drive;" and as there is no suitable subject in the preceding clause to גָּז in the sense of to pass away—the רֹהַב cannot be the subject, as here manifestly the language applies to the brevity of human life—it is more suitable to take the verb impersonally, and translate "we are driven away," comp. "we are cut off" in ver. 6. In reality, however, it is God that drives away just as there it is God that cuts off. The חִישׁ is an adverb, *suddenly*. To the sudden driving away, *the fleeing* corresponds suitably, *fleeing* as its consequence.

In the first strophe of the second main division, ver. 11, 12, there are appended to the doctrine of death as the wages of sin, the painful complaint that this relation in all its depths is so little known, and the prayer to God that he would cause this relation to be better known, and lead the heart to repentance. Ver. 11. *Who knows the might of thine anger, and thy fury in proportion to thy fear?* Ver. 12. *To number our days, this do thou teach us, in order that we may obtain a wise heart.*—On ver. 11, Luther: "From this point he shews why and for whose sake he had given this narrative, for the sake, namely, of unfeeling sinners, in order that they may be brought to a sense of their misery. For this is the greatest misery that we men live in such great manifold innumerable distresses, have such a short life, and are in perpetual danger, yea, certain prospect of eternal death, and yet do not feel all this nor know it sufficiently. Who can sufficiently express such stupidity!" The expression "who knows the power of thy wrath," equivalent to "thy wrath as it is made known in the brevity of our existence, the power of death in all its strength," is in the first instance an expression of painful *lamentation* over the inconceivable delusion of men; it however contains within it the heart-felt wish that it may be other-

wise, and the *prayer* that God would alter it, which in ver. 12 rises out of the lamentation. The דּוֹדֵעַ there refers manifestly to the יוֹדֵעַ here. Luther: "This complaint also contains a prayer in it. For Moses wishes that such pestilential security may be torn out of his heart, and out of the hearts of all men, and that all hearts may be animated by faith, so that men may believe that such a thing is true and may be alarmed at such great wrath of God." "As thy fear" is to be understood as equivalent to "in proportion as is demanded by that fear of thee, that piety which is becoming in thy people." Several explain after the example of Venema: according to thy dreadfulness, according to the infinite measure of which in God, are his wrath against sin and his punishment of sin. But "the fear of God" is a phrase of constant occurrence in the sense of "fear *before* God," (compare Deut. ii. 25, Ps. v. 7), and on the other hand there is only one passage which can be referred to in the sense of dreadfulness—viz., Ez. i. 18, a writer who supplies so many anomalous expressions, and even in this one passage the above sense depends upon a false exposition, compare Gesen. Thes.—For what object the Psalmist in ver. 12 wishes his days to be numbered, appears from the reference of the דּוֹדֵעַ to the יוֹדֵעַ of the preceding verse, according to which to number the days and to know the wrath of God must be strictly connected together. May God, the sense is, lead us to lay rightly to heart the brevity of our life, thus cause us to know the greatness of his wrath, the depth of our corruption, and in this way lead us to repentance. Luther: "Such a thing would never have come into my mind as to pray for this, if I had not seen that Moses prayed here for it with all earnestness and valour. For I thought that the hearts of all men were as full of fear and terror as mine is. But if we carefully examine we shall find there are scarcely ten in ten thousand moved by these things as they ought to be; all the others live as if there were no God, and no death. This is the greatest misery, and the one to be most deeply deplored, that men even in death dream of life. There are certainly to be found some men of experience who feel this misery very severely without any such prayer, but the greater part do not feel it; for these generally live in such a way that they value their moment of life as if it were an eternal existence. The prayer which Moses here pens is necessary for these." The כֵּן on which

so much ingenuity has been expended, serves to mark the importance of this knowledge to be imparted only through the favour of God. Arnd: "We are here told that this knowledge comes not from flesh and blood, but from God." "*Thus* teach us," is equivalent to "*this* teach us." The ונבא is not to be translated according to Ewald, § 621, by "and to bring," but § 618, "that we may bring." For as the prayer here is closely connected with the *meditation* in ver. 6–10, it can refer directly only to the knowledge of the relation represented there; and the desire for a wise heart can only come into notice as the *effect* of this knowledge. The הביא never signifies "to carry away," "to obtain," but always "to make," "to bring." The most natural construction is to supply with Abenesra בקרבנו or בנו, *into our inward parts* or *into us*. The translation "that we may bring forward as the best *offering*" would be admissible only if הביא were a word commonly applied to sacrifices, which it is not; only in this case לך would be wanting. Süsskind and Stier are without any good reason inclined to find in this passage an intimation of immortality: "for in what should that wisdom consist which arises from a knowledge of the brevity of our life, if not in the effort after a more extended duration?" The wisdom which is got from a consideration of the brevity of our life, and of the wrath of God manifested in that brevity, consists in fearing God and eschewing evil, Job xxviii. 28, in keeping the words of his covenant and doing accordingly, Deut. xxix. 9, and thus preparing for him the way to fulfil the prayer in ver. 13–17, that he would, at least within the boundary of our brief life-time, manifest his favour, and withdraw his punishing hand.

In ver. 13–17, the second prayer: after the knowledge of the brevity of our existence, and of the greatness of his wrath, and upon the ground of this, and of the repentance called forth by it, may God impart to his church favour and deliverance inside this narrow existence, instead of the punishment and misery which she is now suffering.—Ver. 13. *Turn back, O Lord, how long! and let it repent thee of thy servants.* Ver. 14. *Satisfy us in the morning with thy mercy, and grant that we may rejoice and be glad all our days.* Ver. 15. *Make us glad like to the days in which thou didst afflict us, the years when we saw evil.*

Ver. 16. *Show to thy servants thy doing, and thy glory to their children.* Ver. 17. *And may the beauty of the Lord our God be upon us, and the work of our hand confirm upon us, yea, the work of our hand confirm!*—The "turn back," in ver. 13, is to be supplemented out of "let it repent thee" of the second clause, "of the wrath which now lies upon thy servants" (comp. Ex. xxxii. 12, "Turn back *from the fierceness of thy wrath*, and let it repent thee of the evil concerning thy people," Jer. iv. 28), and also out of the relation to what goes before, where the church had prayed that he would make her turn back from *the wickedness of her heart.* The נחם has, in Niph. and Hithp., only a double sense, *to comfort one's self*, Gen. xxvii. 42, xxxvii. 35, and *to repent*, Num. xxiii. 19, Deut. xxxii. 36, "And it repented him of his servants," ועל עבדיו יתנחם—on which Ps. cxxxv. 14 depends—and Ex. xxxii. 12, 14, "And it repented the Lord of the evil which he had said he would do to his people,"—to this Jo. ii. 13 refers, the preceding passage is taken from the Pentateuch—Jud. ii. 18, Jer. xv. 6. Those senses flow easily from the fundamental sense, the quieting of the excited affection: not so, however, a third one, which has been arbitrarily adopted, and applied here in more ways than one, "to have compassion on." Of the two ascertained senses, the one *to repent* is the only one that is suitable here; and it is also confirmed by the two remarkably accordant parallel passages from the Pentateuch, Ex. xxxii. 12, and Deut. xxxii. 36—in the former passage, the Niph. is a very marked point of connection, and the same may be said of "for thy servant" in the second, to which the "of evil for thy people" in the first serves as a commentary. In reference to the sense, Calvin correctly remarks: "According to the usual phraseology of Scripture, God is said to *repent*, when, after dissipating sadness and giving again occasion for joy, he appears as if he had changed;" comp. on the repentance of God, the Beitr. P. iii. p. 453 ss.—In reference to "in the morning," in ver. 14, comp. at Ps. lix. 16.—In reference to the stat. constr. ימות and שנות in ver. 15, comp. Ew. § 500. The ימות very remarkably occurs only here and in Deut. xxxii. 7; in other passages it is always ימים. There it occurs in like manner as here, in connection with שנות, and manifestly this connection has occasioned the peculiar termination. Jo. Arnd: "For we have seen it in those who have

lived before us. How didst thou gladden Noah after the flood, Lot after the destruction of Sodom, Jacob after his distress in the famine, Joseph after his imprisonment, and the children of Israel after the captivity! These are all glasses in which we find this word written: after trouble God again makes glad."—The *doing* of God is, according to the connection and the parallel, only a *salutary* doing. The Psalmist prays, in the first instance, only that God would make himself known very visibly in his deeds. The assertion, "The poet is longing after some particular mighty deed of God," has no foundation in the words; comp., for example, Ps. xcii. 4, "For thou makest me glad, O Lord, by thy deed; I rejoice over the works of thy hand." If it were so, we must conceive him to be thinking upon the possession of Canaan; comp. xliv. 1.—In reference to the *beauty* of the Lord, in ver. 17, comp. at Ps. xxvii. 4; *may it be upon us* is equivalent to, may it be made known in our experience. By "the work of the hands," according to the parallel passages of the Pentateuch, we cannot suppose any particular undertaking, but only the *collective doings* to be meant; comp. Deut. xiv. 29, "that the Lord thy God may bless thee in all the work of thine hands which thou doest," xvi. 13, xxiv. 19, xxviii. 12, xxx. 9. "To confirm" is "to bring about," "to accomplish." The עליך, —because the promoting comes from above.

PSALM XCI.

The Psalm contains, in representation of the truth, "if God be for me, every thing else may be against me," the expression of joyful confidence in the protection and help of God in all troubles and dangers. "The whole object is to bring to a right trust in God," Berl. B.

The formal arrangement is easy and obvious. First, an Introduction, ver. 1 and 2, which proposes the theme, and communicates the contents of the whole Psalm. Next, there are two strophes, each of seven verses, containing the development, externally separated by the circumstance that, at the conclusion of the first part (ver. 9), the Psalmist repeats what he had said at the conclusion of the Introduction, and thus finishes off this part as a whole. The seven are both times divided by a four and a

three, a division which strikes as particularly well marked in the second strophe, where the three last verses contain an address ot *God*, in which he assures the righteous man of his salvation, and with which the whole suitably ends. But there is also manifestly a break in the first strophe at ver. 7. The seven, as the signature of the whole, appears not only in the number of the verses, but also in the number of the names of God. Jehovah occurs seven times.

The character of the Psalm is entirely general; for it applies to the whole church, at all events, *no less* than it does to its individual believing members, and, as shall hereafter be shown, to the former *in the first instance.* But there is also wanting, it may be observed, every mark by which the date can be certainly determined :—the matter assumes another appearance, if we regard the whole as one group, to which the opening verses form the introduction.

Several expositors have incorrectly assumed the occasion to have been a destructive *disease.* How God affords protection at such an emergency, is indeed brought prominently forward in ver. 6, and perhaps with the design that the church should use this Psalm among others in seasons of pestilence, as it has done at all times: among all the Psalms, no one is more suitable for this purpose. But this reference, so far from being the exclusive, is not even once the preponderating one, which it would have been had the Psalm been called forth by such an occasion. According to a correct exposition, it occurs only in the verse above referred to. And even here it is oppression arising from enemies that occupies the fore-ground, as is usually the case in the Psalm, among the dangers against which the protection of God is sufficient.

The alternation of *thou* and *I* in the Psalm has led many expositors to divide it among alternating choruses. But that this is not the case is clear from the fact that in this way we are obliged to tear asunder what is manifestly connected together ; thus in the Introduction, where the first portion in the first verse must belong to the first chorus, and the second in the second verse to the second chorus, next in ver. 9, where the change occurs in one and the same verse, and where the first portion alloted to a particular chorus is remarkably distinguished for its being far too short and

bald. The fact, however, upon which this hypothesis leans may be far more easily explained by supposing that the Psalmist speaks at one time from his own person to the soul of the righteous one who is in danger, and revives its courage, while at another time he expresses confidence from the soul of the righteous man; and thus in that pleasant alternation which forms the characteristic peculiarity of the Psalm, he employs at one time the *thou* in the character of *teacher*, and at another time the *I*, in the character of *scholar*. If we take a right view of the *I* throughout the Psalm, keeping our attention not so much upon the person of the Psalmist as upon those who were intended to appropriate the Psalm to themselves, the difference between the *thou* and the *I* will be felt as less marked and will occasion scarcely any difficulty. Under the *thou* an *I* is everywhere concealed; for the Psalmist teaches what the person for whose use the Psalm was designed ought to acknowledge: and in like manner, under the *I* there is a *thou;* for the person using the Psalm adopts language put into his mouth by the Psalmist, who is only a *thou* in disguise. The call of instruction in Scripture, (this is the meaning of the alternation), ought always to be responded to by the acknowledgment of the hearer.

Ver. 1, 2.—Ver. 1. *He who sits in the covert of the Most High, spends the night under the shade of the Almighty:* Ver. 2. *I say to the Lord: my confidence and my fortress, my God, in thee I trust.*—The Psalmist, whom God has taken under his care, is perfectly safe under his protection. Instead of *I say*, one might have expected *he says*, which indeed the Septuagint and many others have taken the liberty of substituting, incorrectly, however, if the translation was intended to be an exact one, for אמר can only be the first person future. The Psalmist, however, springs from the tone of the teacher to that of the scholar. Those who find themselves in difficulties here, and at the same time are not willing to make any change upon the אמר, separate the two verses, and make the first an independent one: the man who sits under the protection of the Most High spends the night under the shade of the Almighty. But it is impossible to separate the synonymous parallel clauses of this verse. *To spend the night* is in no respect stronger than to dwell; and the "continually," "well," and "safely," are arbitrary additions. On

"in the covert," comp. Ps. xxvii. 5; xxxi. 20, 1 Sam. xix. 2. Arnd: "The defence of God means a place of concealment, a secret little place where a man hides and covers himself in public general troubles. And the Holy Ghost intends thus to comfort us, if a man can conceal a friend in a secret hidden place in the time of trouble, much more can God." The names of God, "the Most High," "the Almighty," represent the basis of that unbounded confidence in the protection of God which the Psalmist intended to express in ver. 2. Who can do any real injury to the man who stands under the protection of Omnipotence, as it exists in a personal God. On shade = protection, comp. at Ps. xxxvi. 7; lvii. 1. On מחסי comp. Ps. lxxi. 7, and on מצודתי Ps. xviii. 2.

Ver. 3–9.—Ver. 3. *For he delivers thee from the snare of the fowler, from the pestilence of wickedness.* Ver 4. *With his wings he covers thee, and under his wings thou mayest trust.* Ver. 5. *Thou needest not be afraid of the terror of night, nor of the arrow that fleeth by day.* Ver. 6. *Of the pestilence which walketh in darkness, of the disease which wasteth at mid-day.* Ver. 7. *Thousands fall at thy side, and ten thousand at thy right hand, yet it shall not strike thee.* Ver. 8. *Only with thine eye shalt thou see it, and behold the recompence of the wicked.* Ver. 9. *For thou, Lord, art my confidence, thou makest the Most High thy habitation.—The snare of the fowler* is a term designating the cunning and power of enemies, employed also in Ps. cxxiv. 7. Security, in the highest sense, is in these words promised to the believer against the plots of Satan, as the most dangerous and destructive enemy, comp. 2 Tim. ii. 26. The הוה denotes *wickedness* here as in Ps. lvii. 1; lii. 2, 7; xciv. 20. The plural strengthens the expression, and denotes the whole mass of wickedness. The pestilence of wickedness is the pestilential ruin which it threatens. Even in Hos. xiii. 14, the pestilence is a figurative expression for destruction, and in Is. xxviii. 2, the storm of the disease is a ruinous storm like a disease. According to the common translation דבר is pestilence in the proper sense, and הוות in the sense of misery, occupies the place of an adjective; thus Luther: "from the destructive pestilence." But according to our translation הוות corresponds to יקוש; not only in the first half of this verse, but also in vers. 4 and 5, the lan-

guage is still of the oppression of enemies, and the *pestilence* is spoken of for the first time in verse 6; by this translation, therefore, the arrangement of the Psalm is destroyed.—In ver. 4 the תחסה is to be translated "thou mayest trust," "thou findest security," comp. "thou mayest not be afraid," of ver. 5. The parallel, and probably the fundamental passage is Ps. xxxvi. 7, comp. also Ps. lxi. 4, and Ruth ii. 12. In reference to "his truth," comp. at Ps. lvii. 3.—It is obvious from the parallelism, that *the terror of the night* is, in the first instance and especially, to be understood of *stratagems* of enemies: in the verse before us, what *men* prepare by day and by night, and in the following verse what *sickness* does. It becomes manifest on comparing the passage, Prov. iii. 23–26, which so strikingly agrees with our Psalm, especially in that very peculiar expression, "thy foot shall not stumble," that the Psalmist had it distinctly in his eye. It is there said, "when thou liest down thou shalt not be afraid, yea, thou shalt lie down and thy sleep shall be sweet: thou mayest not be afraid of sudden fear, neither of the *desolation of the wicked* when it cometh." Comp. also the Song of Sol. iii. 8, where every one of the warriors around Solomon's bed has his sword at his side, "because of fear in the night," possible hostile stratagem, for it is this only that can be met by the sword, Job xxi. 9, xv. 21. It is not the Psalmist, but merely a part of his expositors, that lead us here into "an unsafe spiritual region." The Old Testament knows nothing of spectres. The *arrow* is the arrow of the *enemy* (comp. Ps. lviii. 7); and there is just as little reason for thinking of the sun-stroke, or of any thing of a like nature here, as there was in the first clause for thinking of spectres. As oppression from enemies always stands so much in the foreground throughout the Old Testament, there is the less reason for construing figuratively what literally refers to it. Berleb. B.: "even when it looks dark in the heart when the enemy comes easily upon us."—In ver. 6 the *darkness* is named first, because in the darkness of night all evils assume an aggravated character, especially wide spread *disease*, whose dangerous character makes it allied to the darkness of night, with which it is represented by the imagination as closely connected.—In ver. 7 the subject of יגיע is not specially *disease*, but evil, or destruction in general. The words are as much connected with ver. 2–5

as with ver. 6. The expression leads rather to warlike relations than to the spreading of a contagion, comp. Ps. xxvii. 3. In reference to the thought comp. Ps. xxxii. 6.—In ver. 8 many expositors take רַק as a particle of assurance, *only* = *surely*, comp. at Ps. xxxii. 5. Then the thousand and the ten thousand in ver. 7 are to be regarded as the enemies of the Psalmist (or of the Church in whose name he speaks), whose destruction implies his deliverance. Ps. xcii. 11 is in favour of this view, where what the eye sees is just the destruction of the enemies. We may also explain otherwise: "only thou shalt see it with thine eyes," in opposition to it coming upon him in ver. 7.—In reference to *thy habitation* in ver. 9, comp. at Ps. xc. 1.

Ver. 10–16.—Ver. 10. *There shall no evil befal thee, and no plague shall come near thy dwelling.* Ver. 11. *For he gives his angels charge over thee, that they guard thee in all thy ways.* Ver. 12. *They shall bear thee up in their hands that thou dash not thy foot upon a stone.* Ver. 13. *Thou shalt trample upon the lions and the adders, tread on the young lions and the dragons.* Ver. 14. *Because he cleaves to me, I will deliver him, I will set him on high, because he knows my name.* Ver. 15. *He calls upon me, I will answer him; I am with him in trouble, I will deliver him and honour him.* Ver. 16. *I will satisfy him with long life, and will cause him to see my salvation.*—In the second clause of ver. 10 allusion is to all appearance made to Ex. xii. 23, the exemption of Israel at the infliction of judgment upon the Egyptians.—In ver. 11, the צִוָּה with לְ is "to give charge in reference to any thing," as Num. viii. 20. The angels appeared in similar circumstances in ancient times, Gen. xxviii. 12, "behold a ladder stood upon the earth, and its head reached to heaven, and the angels of God ascended and descended upon it," where we find a figurative representation of what was to happen to the whole chosen family and its individual members at all times. There is neither here, nor any where else in Scripture, the least mention made of *guardian* angels. The commissions of God are entrusted to the whole angelic host; and there is the less room for thinking here of guardian angels attached to individuals, as the Psalmist, throughout the whole Psalm, has his eye especially upon the whole community, although what is said is, at the same time, so expressed, as to be suitable

also to individual members.—In ver. 12, the *stone* is spoken of in prosecution of the figure of the *way*. We can neither here, nor in the fundamental passage, Prov. iii. 23, translate "thy foot strikes not," but only "thou strike not thy foot." For the נגף is always transitive. The language in both of the two verses does not apply to dangers which one seeks, but only to such dangers as meet the righteous man unsought, in his course through life. The artifice of the tempter in Matth. iv. 6, consisted in keeping this out of view.—The *lions* and the *serpents*, in ver. 13, represent the two kinds of dangers to which the righteous man is exposed, viz., open violence and secret cunning. The Berleb. B. "as the Israelites, when they travelled through the wilderness, Deut. viii. 15, Samson, Judges xiv. 5, 6, David, 1 Sam. xvii. 34, 35, and Daniel, Dan. vi. 23, gained victories over lions; such power of victory was specially promised to the disciples of Christ, Luke x. 19."—In the first clause of ver. 16, expositors are too ready with the obvious remark, that the promise of long life is specially an Old Testament one. This promise, as is manifest from the fundamental passages of the Pentateuch, even Ex. xx. 12, and Deut. v. 16, where Israel is addressed, refers, in the first instance, to the *whole church*, and in so far we cannot limit the promise to Old Testament times. But even in regard to individuals (Berleb. B.: such as Abraham, Gen. xxv. 8, Job xlii. 17, David, 1 Chron. xxiii. 1), would we not be ashamed at the sight of a venerable old man in Christ, if we did not recognise, in a long life spent in the favour of God, a blessing of God? The difference between the Old and the New Testament, in this respect, is this, that, in the former, the other form in which God imparts blessings to his people, namely, by taking them early to himself, was less known, although, in ancient times, the history of Enoch, as a significant type, gave intimation concerning it. On the second clause, comp. Ps. l. 23.

PSALM XCII.

The Psalmist, or rather the church, in whose name he speaks, expresses readiness to praise God, ver. 1–4, and then praises, proceeding to this duty, first, in general, the greatness of God in

the annihilation of the wicked, ver. 5–7. He next paints this *more fully*, ver. 9–15, and also as intimately connected with it, the salvation of the righteous.

The Psalm divides into two strophes, each of seven verses, the first of which is divided by 4, 3, and the second by 3, 4. The first contains the introduction and the thesis; the second the development. In the middle, in ver. 9, we have an intercalary verse, which makes itself known as such by its brevity, and which, like a high fortress, rules the second part, and brings together, in a few weighty words, its contents. The seven appears as the signature of the whole even in the names of God.

The theme is the same as in Ps. xxxvii., xlix., lxxiii., God's retributive righteousness, which brings destruction to the wicked and salvation to the righteous. But the way and manner of treatment are different. The Psalmist does not come forward here teaching and exhorting, as he does in Ps. xxxvii. and xlix., nor in view of the church contending and conquering, as in Ps. lxxiii.; with holy skill he leads, as it were, the saints into the midst of the praise of God, and teaches them, by it, to gain the victory in their conflicts. The Psalm is fundamentally, as is manifest particularly from its conclusion, ver. 16, of a consoling and soothing character; the consolation, however, is imparted in the form of the *praise* of God, to which the Psalmist exhorts the church.

According to the title, "a Psalm, a song of praise for the Sabbath-day," the Psalm was intended for use in the public worship of God on the Sabbath, on which day, according to Lev. xxiii. 3, there was held "a holy convocation;" as Ps. lxxxi. was intended to be used at the Passover. According to its contents, it is manifestly well adapted for such an use. On the Sabbath-day men ought "to rest from their own works," in order to consider the works of God leisurely and together; comp. ver. 5, "how great are thy works, O Lord." Among these works, however, one of the greatest, not less great than the creation of the heavens and the earth, is his preservation of his church in the midst of the evil world. It is in accordance also with the title that the Psalm bears altogether a general character, and contains no notice of special relations. Finally, also, there is the fact, that the Psalm refers, in the first instance, to the whole church, while, at the

same time, every thing is designedly so arranged, as to render it suitable also to individuals. That it is the church, in the first instance, that speaks, is evident from the fourth verse, according to which, the speaker proposes to praise God with a multiplicity of instruments, from the "*our* God," in ver. 14, and from the reference, in ver. 10, to the fundamental passages which apply to Israel, and in ver. 12–14, to the symbol of the temple.

The Psalm, by its formal arrangement, is manifestly nearly related to Ps. xci.—in both there are 16 verses, in both two strophes each of seven verses, divided by 3 and 4, and in both Jehovah occurs seven times. There is a resemblance also in other respects—the subject-matter and the tone, which is that of soft tenderness, never rising above a certain height—the connection between the application at once to the whole church and to individuals—and, finally, the agreement between ver. 11 of the one Psalm, and ver. 8 of the other.

That the Psalm before us was composed later than Ps. lxxiii. is obvious from ver. 6, when compared with Ps. lxxiii. 22. More exact information as to the date of composition, will be gathered from Ps. xciii., which, with it, makes up one pair.

Ver. 1–7.—Ver. 1. *It is good to praise the Lord, and to sing to thy name, O thou Most High.* Ver. 2. *To make known in the morning thy mercy, and thy faithfulness in the nights.* Ver. 3. *Upon the ten strings and upon the harp, with musing upon the guitar.* Ver. 4. *For thou makest me glad, O Lord, by thy doings, over the works of thy hands I rejoice.* Ver. 5. *How great are thy works, O Lord, very deep are thy thoughts.* Ver. 6. *A stupid man knows not this, a fool understands it not.* Ver. 7. *When the wicked spring up like grass, and all evil-doers flourish, it is the case that they shall be recompensed for ever and eternally.*—The " (already) in the morning," (comp. lxxxviii. 13, lvii. 8, v. 3), and the " (still) in the nights " (comp. at Ps. xvi. 7), indicate the great zeal in praising God, for his mercy and truth, corresponding to the glory of the manifestations of these perfections. This general reference is undoubted. But, perhaps, the mention of morning and evening refers specially to the *morning* and *evening sacrifice*, and indicates that the Psalm was intended to be sung at the bringing forward of these on the Sab-

bath-day. This is all the more probable, as the third verse also refers manifestly to the public festival. The *mercy* and *faithfulness* of God are those properties which guarantee help to his people, and which are manifested in their deliverance. The circumstance that these are mentioned at the very beginning of the Psalm, shews that, even from the beginning, we have to do, not with a general praise of God, but with praise in some well-defined connection; and also sets aside the false constructions of ver. 5. In ver. 3, mention is first made generally of instruments of ten strings (ten instead of the bodily incorporated ten); for ver. 1 reaches to the ten here; comp. Ps. xxxiii., whose introduction is nearly allied to ours, and was probably modelled after it. Next we have especially the (ten stringed) harp, and the (ten stringed) guitar. On "musing upon the guitar," comp. at Ps. ix. 16. For the sake of the symmetry, the not very obvious term עֲלֵי is used. It denotes the musing upon the guitar as the *substratum* of the praise, the means by which it obtains a standing.—The mention of the mercy and the grace in the 2d verse shews that at "the doing of God," in ver. 4 (comp. at Ps. xc. 16), and "the works of his hands," we are not at all to think of the creation of the heavens and earth, but singly and alone of his salvation-bringing doings on behalf of his people, the wonders of their deliverance.—The Psalmist begins in ver. 5 the praise of God, which had been announced, and the motives to which had been mentioned in ver. 1–3. What kind of *works* and *thanks* the Psalmist means is particularly intimated in ver. 7, which should be distinguished from vers. 5 and 6 by inverted commas. It is the works and counsels of God for the deliverance of his people, a deliverance which is secured by the destruction of the wicked, their enemies; comp. Ps. xl. 5, "thy thoughts *towards* us, nothing is to be compared to thee; I will declare and speak of them, they are not to be numbered." The *depth* of the thoughts of God, in parallel with the *greatness* of his works, is not at all their darkness—this is only one *consequence* pointing to the basis, which is mentioned as such in ver. 6—but their glory and inexhaustible riches, comp. Job xi. 8, Is. lv. 9, Rom. xi. 33.—This depth is seen especially in this, that the apparent *end* of the thoughts of God is so often seen to be the real beginning of their realization. When every thing appears to be gone, and

wickedness completely to triumph, the salvation of the righteous and the destruction of the wicked suddenly break forth.—On ver. 6 comp. Ps. lxxiii. 22. Were God's thoughts less deep and glorious, did he repay the wicked at every particular transgression immediately with his punishment, and did he bestow salvation immediately upon the righteous according to the canon which Job's friends with their limited views had laid down, the government of the world would become plain even to the dark eye of ungodliness. But its depth makes it a *secret*, the understanding of which very often in times of conflict is withheld even from the pious, as is manifest from the example of Job and the author of the seventy-third Psalm, and in which there is always much that may be learned. He who has got a deep insight into this secret, and has seen that the conduct of God towards *his people* is always and only *grace*, even though often under the deepest covering, and that his conduct towards the wicked is always only *wrath*, even when they flourish and blossom, he alone can cry out, "O the depth of the riches," &c., and to him *these* works of God appear greater and more glorious still than the works of creation.—On ver. 7 comp. Ps. xxxvii. 38. The *annihilation* of the wicked comes into notice here as the basis of the *deliverance of the righteous*, which is the proper theme of the Psalm. Arnd: "Nothing except it be of God can stand, whether it be skill, or riches, or honour, or power. It rises and flourishes to appearance, but in the end it is only a thistle-bush and a noxious weed, good for nothing but the fire."

Ver. 8. *And thou art height in Eternity, O Lord.* This verse forms the summit-point of the Psalm. God is the concrete and the personal *height*, = "he is *holy*," in Ps. xxii. 3, never *depth*, as is imagined always by ungodliness, and in times of conflict also by the godly; the *appearance* of depth is rather the highest height; God is strongest when he appears to our short-sighted eye as weak. The man who can only hold fast this one truth, that God is eternally *height*, will never despond under the cross, and will laugh at the triumph of the wicked. Not to be able any longer to form this thought is the essence of despair. If God be still *height* to us, we may well be joyful and in comfort however low we lie. In ver. 9–15 there follow the facts in which God shews himself as the eternal height.

Ver. 9–15.—Ver. 9. *For behold thine enemies, O Lord, for behold thine enemies perish, all evil-doers are scattered.* Ver. 10. *And thou exaltest, like that of the buffalo, my horn, I sprinkle with fresh oil.* Ver. 11. *And mine eye looks upon mine enemies, of those who lift themselves up against me, evil-doers, mine ears hear.* Ver. 12. *The righteous springs up like the palm-tree, like the cedar on Lebanon he grows.* Ver. 13. *They are planted in the house of the Lord, in the courts of our God they flourish.* Ver. 14. *They get forward even in old age, they are full of sap and flourishing.* Ver. 15. *To shew that the Lord is righteous, my rock, in him there is no unrighteousness.*—The "for" in ver. 9 connects the whole strophe with ver. 8. The "behold" points to the clearly obvious facts. The enemies of the Lord are at the same time the enemies of the righteous man; and it is as such that they are mentioned here. *O Lord*, thou personal Height. They *separate* themselves,—they are driven asunder, in the state of separation still more incapable of hurting, comp. Job iv. 11.—In ver. 10 we cannot translate "but," but only "*and* thou exaltest." The lifting up of the righteous stands in immediate connection with the ruin of the wicked, and is its consequence. "Thou *exaltest*," looks back to ver. 8. God as the *Height* makes his people high. "As the buffalo," stands concisely for "as the horns of the buffalo on high," or, "so that they are like the horns of the buffalo." The fundamental passages are Num. xxiii. 22, xxiv. 8, where it is said of Israel, "his strength is as of a unicorn," and Deut. xxxiii. 17, "the horns of the buffalo are his horns, with them he shall push the people together to the ends of the earth." Parallel passages are Ps. lxxv. 4, 10, lxxxix. 17. *Thou exaltest my horn*,—enablest me to rise up with spirit, with a sense of strength, and in an attitude of attack. In the second clause a number of arbitrary interpretations are set aside by the remark that בלל בשמן is the constant expression for "to pour out oil." The verb is transitive, as it always is. The object, the *head* (comp. Ps. xxiii. 5, "thou anointest my head with oil"), might very naturally be omitted, as it was only the head that was anointed, comp. at Ps. xxiii. 5, xlv. 7. The "growing green" stands figuratively for "fresh," as in ver. 14, it is applied to the man whose condition is represented by the oil of joy. In the fresh oil,

the verdant olive tree is as it were still seen, Ps. lii. 8.—The doubled ב in ver. 11 cannot be considered as pointing out the object. For it is only ראה, and not at all הביט that occurs with ב in the sense of "to look upon any thing with pleasure," and שמע never stands with ב of the object: it would not even be suitable in this sense, for the Psalmist does not hear his enemies with pleasure, he hears of them. We must therefore take ב both times in the sense of "on." It is only said in general that there is a looking and a hearing on, or in regard to, the enemies—*what* that is, there is no occasion for particularly describing. The "evil-doers" stand in apposition, equivalent to who or because they are evil-doers, and therefore subject to the wrath of God.—Ver. 12–14 gives an interpretation of the symbols of the sanctuary. The holy candlestick, the symbol of the Church of God, the people of the covenant (comp. Beitr. iii. p. 645), had the form of a tree with flowers and fruit (comp. Bähr Symb. i. p. 446 ss.), for the purpose of denoting the joyful prosperity of the Church of God. Figures of flowers were found on the two curtains of the sanctuary and of the court of the tabernacle, Bähr, p. 376. Flowers and blossoms were specially the insignia of the priesthood to denote its joyful prosperity, Bähr, p. 365. The temple of Solomon was adorned in the interior with palms and opening blossoms (comp. Keil on the temple of Solomon, p. 143), as the symbol of the increase, the blossoming, and the prosperity of the kingdom of God. The reference to these symbols is all the more suitable, as the Psalm before us also refers in the first instance to the whole of the church. What is said of it, however, applies also to every one of its individual members.—The subject in ver. 13 is "the righteous" as resembling palms and cedars, or rather as the *spiritual* palms and cedars. Hitzig's assertion, that we must rather, according to the adjectives in ver. 14, understand that olive-trees are meant, is inconsistent with the reference to the symbols of the sanctuary. Even palms and cedars are always green. Schubert says of the former (Travels, ii. p. 138): "the palm-tree retains even in heat and drought its roof of foliage."—The obvious synonymous parallel in ver. 13 shews that we cannot translate with Luther: "Those who are planted in the house of our Lord shall flourish in the courts of our God." By the house of the Lord we can only understand

the external sanctuary; in it, however, the servants of God dwell *spiritually* with him, and are cared for by him with paternal love; comp. Ps. lxxxiv. 3: on the "courts" at the same passage. There lies at the bottom an abbreviated comparison: these spiritual trees flourish in the house of God as the natural trees when they are planted in a rich soil, Is. v. 1, or by rivers of water, Ps. i. 3.—Ver. 15 rests upon Deut. xxxii. 4, "the rock, his work is perfect, for all his ways are judgment, a God of truth and without iniquity, just and right is he." Believers must always at least agree in this ancient praise of the uprightness and faithfulness of God, even although many things often happen to lead them wrong. On the "uprightness" comp. at Ps. xxv. 8. God shews himself upright inasmuch as he manifests himself rich in help to his people. The expression "my rock," which refers to the divine unchangeableness, and veracity, and faithfulness (comp. at Ps. xviii. 2), at the fundamental passage equivalent to faithfulness (comp. thy faithfulness here in ver. 2), stands in the second clause in the same relation as "Jehovah" does in the first, to which it stands in several ways in strict reference, comp. at Ps. xviii. 2. "In whom there is no unrighteousness" corresponds to "upright." The ו in וְלֹא stands with a certain emphasis, comp. on this use of the copulative Gesen. Thes. i. p. 396, c. c. Instead of the rare form עַלְתָּה (comp. Job v. 16), the Kri has the usual עַוְלָתָה.

PSALM XCIII.

The might of the world threatens to shake the earth, and, with it, the kingdom of God. But the Psalmist places, in opposition to its blustering rage, the *Lord*, whom he beholds coming "in his kingdom," clothed with majesty, girt with strength,—in opposition to their *modern* throne, the eternal throne of the Lord, ver. 1, 2. The might of the world roars like the tumultuous sea, but the Lord on high is more glorious than the sea with its swelling waves, ver. 3, 4. The sum is in ver. 5: the Lord's promises are to be depended upon, he will always protect his house.

The reference, which it is impossible not to notice, in which "glorious in the height is the Lord," in ver. 4, stands to "thou art height in eternity, O Lord," in Ps. xcii. 8, the kernel and

middle point of that whole Psalm, has already led commentators to notice a near connection with Ps. xcii. Next, there is " the tautological nature of the language, the sense being spread over two clauses, the first of which sinks down to the vocative of Jehovah " (Hitzig), in ver. 3, to be compared with Ps. xcii. 9. We have still further the circumstance, that the number five of the verses of our Psalm, the signature of the *half* makes up, with the fifteen of Ps. xcii., the number 20, and that the five times repeated Jehovah (Jehovah is spoken of and addressed in alternate verses), makes up, with the seven repetitions of Ps. xcii., the number 12. These facts shew that our Psalms form one pair of Psalms, an idea which is decidedly favoured by the *contents;* both Psalms minister consolation to the church, exposed to danger by the might of the world.

In regard to the *date of composition*, our Psalm presupposes a powerful pressure from the might of the world against the kingdom of God, and, consequently, cannot be dated earlier than the Assyrian catastrophe. And that we cannot descend later than this era is evident from the very apparent dependence of the Psalm upon Ps. xlvi. The temple appears in ver. 5 as *threatened.* The result here obtained applies equally, not only to Ps. xcii., but also to Ps. xci.; comp. the introduction to Ps. xcii. More exact particulars can be obtained, wherever they are generally possible, only out of the *following* Psalms.

In reference to the *contents*, Calvin : " The might of God is set forth as the ground of confidence, whereas, generally, fear and trembling arise from it, so that we do not sufficiently clothe God with his might, but rob him of his dominion."

Ver. 1, 2.—Ver. 1. *The Lord reigneth, he clotheth himself with majesty, he clothed himself, the Lord girdeth himself with power, therefore the earth stands firm, it does not move.* Ver. 2. *Thy throne is firmly grounded of old, from eternity thou art.*—" The Lord reigneth," in ver. 1, alludes to the form used at the proclamation of the commencement of the reign of earthly sovereigns, comp. 2 Sam. xv. 10, 1 Kings i. 11, 13, 2 Kings ix. 13. This allusion makes it plain that the language does not apply to the *constant government* of God, but to a *new glorious manifestation of his dominion*, as it were a new ascent of the throne ; Michaelis correctly : rex factus est. We are led to the

same result, also, by the parallel passages, Ps. xcvi. 10, xcvii. 1, xcix. 1, where the same form occurs; the language in all these passages refers to the coming of the Lord in his kingdom. In like manner, in Is. xxiv. 23, where the discourse is likewise of the kingdom of glory: "the moon is ashamed, and the sun is ashamed, for the Lord of hosts reigns on mount Zion, and at Jerusalem, and before his ancients there in glory," comp. Obed. ver. 21, Zech. xiv. 9, and especially Rev. xi. 17, xix. 6. Besides this, the התאזר, "he girds himself," not "he is girded," can only be referred to a future manifestation of the glory of God. In face, therefore, of the high-handed proclamation of the might of the world, that it shall now, more than ever, lord it over the earth and the kingdom of God, in face of the cry, "the Assyrian or the Babylonian reigneth," the Psalmist raises his cry, "Jehovah reigneth;" he announces that the dominion of the Lord, so far from being overthrown by such feeble onsets, is now about, for the first time, to become manifest in its full glory. His cry, "the Lord reigneth," found the beginning of its verification at the destruction of Babylon and the deliverance of Israel; as to its full import, however, it is Messianic,—in Christ the Lord has truly come to reign, and he shall reign still more gloriously in the future; comp. the above mentioned passages in Rev. This cry, "the Lord reigneth," his servants always raise still against the fierce onsets of the world against the church, with which it gains nothing more than that it thereby calls forth a new glorious revelation of his dominion. It is the holy war-cry of the church in face of the world. The remarks of Calvin upon this are well deserving of consideration: "all acknowledge with the mouth what the prophet here teaches, but how few place this shield, as is meet, in front of the might of the world, so that they fear nothing, be it ever so terrible." The preterites are explained by the circumstance, that the Psalmist, as a *seer*, has the future before his eyes. He sees, with pleasure, how the Lord enters upon his kingdom, makes use of the rod of majesty, and girds on the sword of strength, in face of the haughty world. The לבש is "to put on," as in Is. li. 9. The majesty with which the Lord clothes himself, forms the opposition, the antidote against the majesty and pride of the world; comp. Ps. lxxxix. 9, xlvi. 4. The second לבש cannot be referred to the preceding one: majesty

he puts on, the Lord puts on. For, in this case, there would be nothing but a flat repetition. And we cannot construe: the Lord puts on power, he is girded (therewith), for the עז is connected by the accusative with התאזר. The easiest plan is to suppose that the Psalmist begins the sentence, "he puts on strength" (comp. the לביש עז in Is. li. 9), and then suddenly changes it, because the strength corresponding to the sword appears still better as a *girdle* (comp. at Ps. xlv. 3, lxxvi. 10); *he puts on—girds on strength.* The אף, *also*, deduces the consequence surely to be determined from what precedes: Mich. *unde etiam.* The *globe* (comp. on תבל at Ps. xc. 2), together with the kingdom of God upon it, is, by the plunderers of the world, shaken to its deepest foundations; comp. Ps. xlvi. 2, 3, 6. But by the coming of the Lord in his kingdom it shall be again established. He will display, in *preserving* it, the same omnipotence which he displayed in creating it; comp. Ps. civ. 5, "he has founded the earth, it moves not for ever." This allusion to *creation* is peculiarly suitable in a hymn which was intended to be used on the Sabbath-day. The beginning and the end of the verse occur word for word again in Ps. xcvi. 10. On the clause, "it shall not move," comp. Ps. xlvi. 5.—In ver. 2 the Psalmist places the *newly erected throne of wickedness*, Ps. xciv. 20, over against the eternal throne of God, which shall survive the former as long as it has preceded it. The נכון is "he establishes," "he grounds firm;" comp. 2 Sam. vii. 13, 16, 1 Kings ii. 45. The מאז is properly "from there," or "then," next "from of old;" Prov. viii. 22, Is. xlviii. 3, 5, 7. The throne of wickedness has no "then;" it is of yesterday, like a mushroom sprung out of the earth. The *eternity* is not the bare but the omnipotent eternity, comp. at Ps. xc. 2. He who is in this way the first is also the *last*, Is. xli. 4, xliv. 6, Rev. i. 17; he remains when all the powers of the earth fall in the dust.

Ver. 3, 4.—Ver. 3. *The floods lift up, O Lord, the floods lift up their voice, the floods lift up their din.* Ver. 4. *Than the voices of many waters, than the glorious waves of the sea, more glorious in the height is the Lord.*—There can be no doubt that the sea comes into notice here as the symbol of worldly power. There was no need, as Maurer desiderates, of its being expressly marked out as such. For it is the standing emblem, comp. at

Ps. lxxxix. 9, and also Ps. cvii. 23 ss.; and in our Psalm, the design of which is to impart consolation in the conflicts occasioned by the threatening power of the world, it is everywhere before the eye of the Psalmist. The fundamental passage here, also, is Ps. xlvi. By the *floods* are meant the waters of the sea; comp. Jon. ii. 4, and probably, also, Ps. xxiv. 2, where the *floods* are parallel with the *seas*. That we are here *chiefly* to think of these is obvious, from the circumstance, that the sea is the usual symbol of the tumultuous mass of nations, and also from the 4th verse, where the Psalmist expressly explains, that by the "many glorious waters," = "floods" in ver. 3, are to be understood "the waves of the sea." The דכי, properly the "collision of the waves," corresponds to the משברים in ver. 4, the "breakers." On "the Lord in majesty is more glorious than the voice," &c., in ver. 4, comp. "more glorious art thou than mountains of prey," in Ps. lxxvi. 4. The *voice* of the floods is thus expressly brought forward with reference to the *voice* of the Lord, the thunder, as the outward proof of his glory, infinitely exalted above that of the sea; comp. Ps. xxix. As the thunder sounds louder than the loudest noise of the sea, so the Lord is infinitely more glorious than the sea, infinitely more glorious than the power of the world symbolized by it;[a] and that nation, whose God is the Lord, would be foolish indeed, if it were to tremble before the might of the world. It requires only to open its ear to the thunder to be comforted.

Ver. 5. *Thy testimonies are very surely to be depended upon, holiness, O Lord, becomes thy house for ever.*—On "the testimony" and "the testimonies" of the Lord, as expressive of the Mosaic Law, compare at the fundamental passage, Ps. xix. 7, "the testimony of the Lord is sure," Ps. xxv. 10, lx. Title, lxxx. Title, cxix. 24. Here, according to the connection, we can only think of the *promises* of the law, comp. Ps. xciv. 12, "blessed is the man whom thou instructest and teachest out of thy law," by which assurance is given to his people of everlasting existence and of deliverance from all troubles. It *follows* from the glory of the Lord, as described in ver. 1–4, that these promises are unconditionally *sure*. The correct interpretation

a The symbolical action of our Lord, Mark iv. 37 ss., depends on passages such as the one now before us.

which many commentators have failed to see, (Luther: thy word is right doctrine), lies at the foundation of the passages in the Apocalypse, xix. 9, xxi. 5, xxii. 6. The Berleb. Bible: "David in this gives as it were a reproof to the soul that it does not sufficiently put faith in the testimonies which God has given it, as to how he himself shall lead it, as if he said: how often has he not assured us that those who commit themselves to him, shall suffer no want? These testimonies are well worth being confided in, and yet we trust them not." The *holiness* which *becomes* the house of such a God, (comp. Ps. xxxiii. 1), must be preserved for it by himself. It is becoming in God that he take care that it be not *desecrated* by impious hand, comp, Ps. lxxiv., lxxix. 1.[a] He can at times in punishment of the sins of his people give it up to be laid waste by the ungodly world, but he must always see to it that it rise like a Phoenix again upon the ashes, so that its holiness is again restored to it. And he *has* seen to this. In room of the *first* house destroyed by the Chaldeans, there arose the *second;* and the second was not destroyed till it had become a mere shell without a kernel, and a glorious new erection of the house of God had come into life in the Christian Church. The *world* did not destroy it; but God himself took down the poor provisional building, when the proper one was completed; and this last one shall preserve its sanctity at all times in spite of all the assaults of the destruction loving world. The fundamental passage is Ps. xxiii. 6: "I dwell in the house of the Lord for ever," לְאֹרֶךְ יָמִים properly "for length of days." The import in both passages is essentially the same. For the house on behalf of whose preservation the Psalmist here expresses his confident hope is the house where the Lord dwells with his people and they with him; and it comes into view only in connection with this property. The preservation of the house for its own sake is not what is spoken of, but only in so far as it is the seat of the church; it is therefore the preservation of the *church* that lies near the Psalmist's heart. The common translation is: the *maintenance of holiness* becomes thy house, it is becoming that it should be held holy by us. By this mis-translation the point of the Psalm is destroyed. There are to be urged against it: that the thought in the connec-

[a] Amyrald. "Thy house shall by thy sacred august presence remain for ever undefiled, nor shall it be violated or polluted by the insolence of thine enemies."

tion is wholly a strange one,—the design of the Psalm is evidently to impart confident reliance on the protection of the Lord in oppressions from the world—that in Ps. xciii., xcii., and even in xci., the subject spoken of is what God does for his people, not what they *should* do for him; besides this we have the analogous conclusion in Ps. xcii., the parallelism, the fundamental passage Ps. xxiii. 6, and also "the for length of days," and finally the קדיש, which does not signify maintenance of holiness but holiness.

PSALM XCIV.

The Psalmist, or rather the church, begins with the expression of *confidence* in the appearance of God for help and vengeance, ver. 1. On the ground of this there next rises the *prayer* that God would rise up against the proud enemies, to which there is added the description of their unreasonable and God-denying ungodliness, ver. 2–7. Upon this there follows the emphatic refutation of those among the people in whom the ungodly assertion alluded to at the close, "that the Lord does not see, the God of Israel does not observe," had found an entrance, ver. 8–11. In opposition to these the Psalmist pronounces those men happy who continue in the firm faith of the help of the Lord: he will interest himself at his own time on behalf of his people, ver. 12–15. He declares that in every suffering the Lord is his consolation and his confidence, ver. 16–23.

If we separate the first verse, as is obvious from itself that we must do, as soon as we get at the correct interpretation of הופיע, it becomes manifest that the Psalm in regard to number is an alphabetical one. The main division consists of 12 verses. Up to this point there is prayer, description of trouble, rejection of despair; and after that, *hope*. The 22 therefore is divided by a 10 and a 12.

That the Psalm does not refer to the internal difference between the wicked and the righteous, but to the relation to *heathen enemies*, is evident from the 5th verse, according to which the wicked distress the people of the Lord and oppress his inheritance, from the 14th verse, according to which the Lord will

not forget his people, and will not forsake his inheritance, from the 10th verse, according to which the punishment of the impious *heathen* is what the ungodly part of the people deny, and the pious hope for in faith, and finally from the mention of "the throne of iniquity," in ver. 20, apparently favoured by God, by which we can understand only the heathen power.

That the Psalm is intimately connected with the series of Psalms of which it forms a part (Ps. xci.–c.), is manifest from the anadiplosis characteristic of these Psalms, ver. 1, 3–23 (compare the introduction to Ps. xciii.), from the sympathy expressed with the expectation peculiar to them of a joyful revelation of God, ver. 1, from the soft tone never rising above a certain height, and from their quiet tenderness, as well as the simple language which flows on easily without any great difficulty.

There is hence a limit fixed, beyond which we cannot go in determining the date of the composition, by the 93d Psalm, which, as was shewn, cannot have been composed at all events later than the Assyrian catastrophe. We are led to the same result also, by the mention here made of *the throne of iniquity*, which shews that the Asiatic power had at that time already arisen and taken up a hostile position against the kingdom of God. The plaintive tone, ver. 6, according to which Israel finds herself in the situation of a *widow* and an *orphan*, ver. 14, according to which the Lord appears to have wholly *forsaken* his people, ver. 17, according to which the people is near *destruction*, leads us away from the time of the Assyrians in which prophets and psalmists are from the beginning full of joyful and triumphant hope, to that of the *Chaldeans*. But that we cannot advance too far into this period is manifest from the circumstance that no mention whatever is made here of the destruction of the city and temple, and of the leading away into captivity and of the dispersion. Yea, if we observe that the descriptions of the severe oppression of the power of the world is altogether general, and remember that Habakkuk, a considerable time before the Chaldean invasion, under Josiah, saw it present in *spirit*, and gave expression, in the language not only of prophecy but also of poetry, to those considerations which were fitted to minister comfort and support on its approach, we shall consider it as not improbable that even our Psalm formed part of that rich spiritual provision which the spirit of God prepared for

the church before it entered upon that painful journey. It is antecedently probable that the voice of the spiritual "watchman of Zion, which made known so distinctly and so earnestly this catastrophe long before its arrival, had called forth a response from the midst of the church,—that *prophecy* was not unaccompanied by *psalmody;* this is all the more probable, as the third chapter of Habakkuk shews us the former in a state of transition to the latter. The tone and character of the Psalm appear much more intelligible if we assign it to the *eve* of this catastrophe, than if we assign it to the catastrophe itself. There occur in it, and this may be said of the whole series to which it belongs, no traces of excitement, no attempts at conflicting with despair, as these meet us in those Psalms which were composed in the midst of the terrible sufferings of the Chaldean catastrophe.

Finally, the special originating point of the Psalm does not deprive it of any of its universal truth—Luther remarks: "This Psalm, as may be easily apprehended, is a prayer of all the pious children of God, and of spiritual people, against all their persecutors, so that it may be used by all pious godly people from the beginning till the end of the world.

Ver. 1. *The God of vengeance, the Lord, the God of vengeance shines.* Luther: "He puts down *God of vengeance* twice as those are wont to do who speak vehemently, and with great earnestness; these men say a thing repeatedly that they may move God." Even the plural, properly "the God of vengeances," strengthens the expression. It indicates that there is in God a whole fulness of vengeance for his injured church. The fundamental passage is Deut. xxxii. 35: "Vengeance is mine and recompense." That God is the God of vengeance forms the sure foundation on which the confident hope of his appearing rests. This is the eternally powerful root from which springs the rod of help for the church. Arnd: "Therefore should the people of God rejoice and be glad because they have such a mighty, strong, and righteous God, who inquires after their blood and avenges it." The הוֹפִיעַ is usually taken as an imperative do thou, God of vengeance, shine forth. But it must rather be taken as a preterite, after the example of the Septuagint and the Vulgate. The imperative would be הוֹפִיעָה, as in Ps. lxxx. 1; as in the fundamental passage, Deut. xxxiii. 2 (comp. at Ps. l. 2), the

form which stands here is the preterite, it is all the more unlikely to have been erroneously taken here for the imperative; the preterite is also the form which occurs in Ps. l. 2, "from Sion—God shines:" Ps. xciii., xcvii., xcix. also begin with the preterite, "the Lord reigneth," comp. Ps. xcvi. 10. In these passages "the Lord reigneth," and in the Psalm before us, "the Lord shines," are presented to the noisy onsets of the world. The firm, confident expectation of an immediate, great manifestation of the Lord, is the distinguishing feature of the whole series of Psalms. The Psalmist looks down from the height of this expectation upon suffering; next, he descends into the deep, in order that, with strength thus received, he may again gradually mount up on high laden with his heavy burden; or: ere he descends into the darkness, he kindles at the candlestick of the divine word, this pit-lamp which alone can enlighten it.

Ver. 2–7.—Ver. 2. *Rise up thou, Judge of the earth, recompense a reward to the proud.* Ver. 3. *How long shall the wicked, O Lord, how long shall the wicked triumph.* Ver. 4. *They sputter, speak impudent things, they brag, all the evil-doers.* Ver. 5. *Thy people, O Lord, they crush and oppress thine inheritance.* Ver. 6. *Widow and stranger they put to death, and they murder the orphan.* Ver. 7. *And say: the Lord sees not, and the God of Jacob observes not.*—On the "lift thyself up," *i. e.*, "show thyself mighty," at ver. 2, comp. at Ps. vii. 6. Luther: "Because he only is judge and avenger, the pious pray that he would lift himself up, that is, that he would set himself on high on his seat as judge and show his work, not allow himself to be so oppressed as if he were nothing." On גְּמוֹל comp. at Ps. vii. 4, to present gifts = to recompense. The fundamental passage is Ps. xxviii. 4, "give them their gifts," comp. also Ps. lxxix. 12. In reference to the גֵּאִים, Luther: "He means here the proud, not only those who are haughty in heart, but also those who have got the upper hand and the victory in persecution, as if they had conquered and suppressed the godly."—The expression, "they sputter," in ver. 4, depends on Ps. lix. 7, "behold they sputter with their mouth." The Psalmist delights to make use of the words which former holy men of God had uttered in reference to troubles and dangers which God had already averted. What the wicked did sputter out, is not expressly mentioned in

the fundamental passage; it is sufficient first to indicate the quantity, and after that, for the first time, the quality. Hence, we do not need to supply עתק here, in which case even "they speak" would be flat. In reference to "they speak impudence," comp. at the fundamental passage, Ps. lxxv. 5. The Hiph. of אמר occurs only here, and, in all probability, was formed by the Psalmist himself from the four Hithp. in Ps. xviii. 25, 26. We must, however, all the more on this account, keep by the above-ascertained sense of אמר, *to speak*. The Hithp. denotes zealous, vehement, impassioned speaking, comp. Ew. § 124. The translation, "they rise up," is not only etymologically ungrounded, but is less suitable, even in the parallelism, as the first clause refers only to *speaking*. Ver. 5 treats for the first time of *deeds*. On "the evil-doers" comp. Ps xcii. 7, 9.—*They oppress*, ver. 5, as formerly Pharaoh in Egypt did, comp. Gen. xv. 13; Ex. i. 12.—The 6th verse is not to be understood literally: it is obvious from the mention of "the strangers" that there is an abbreviated comparison,—*thy people, who are as helpless as the widow, &c.* The *murdering* also does not suit *domestic* relations, and the heathen enemies did not make the *personæ miserabiles* the chief objects of their rage. The figurative expression here, as well as the individualizing one in Ps. lxviii. 5, owes its origin to those passages in the law in which the widow and the fatherless are mentioned as objects of the tender care of God, and as such are specially committed to the loving treatment of Israel, for example, Deut. x. 18, "He defends the right of the fatherless and the widow, and loves the stranger," Ex. xxii. 20 ss. "Thou shalt neither vex a stranger nor oppress him . . . ye shall not afflict any widow or fatherless child. If thou afflict them! For if they cry to me, I will hear their cry. And my anger waxes hot, and I kill you with the sword, and your wives shall be widows and your children orphans." There is great emphasis in the reference to these passages. They contain a rich fulness of comfort for the afflicted people. If orphans in the proper sense are the objects of the loving care of God, he must also take under the same care his own destitute *people*. If he avenges the widows on their oppressors, he must also visit his widowed church on its oppression. Does he punish the wicked among Israel who oppress the miserable? he must also punish the wicked heathen who oppress his

own people in their affliction.—On ver. 7, comp. Ps. x. 11, 13, xiv. 1, lix. 7.

Ver. 8–11.—Ver. 8. *Yet mark, ye fools among the people, and, ye stupid, when will ye become wise?* Ver. 9. *He who planted the ear shall he not hear? He who formed the eye shall he not see?* Ver. 10. *He who summons the heathen shall he not punish? he who teaches men knowledge.* Ver. 11. *The Lord knows the thoughts of men that they are vain.*—The Psalmist, in ver. 8, casts up the want of knowledge which the ignorance of God will imply to those, ver. 7, to whom it belongs: but he does not address himself to those who first started the objection, the blind heathen, who could only become wise to their cost, but to the foolish among the people, among Israel, comp. Judges v. 9, among whom the assertion of the heathen found a response. That we cannot translate "ye foolish people," understanding the address to be directed to the heathen, is clear from the circumstance—that the Psalmist has before his eyes those who are capable of being instructed from creation—it would be in vain to instruct the *heathen* from creation,—from the opposition of the other intelligent part of the people, in ver. 12, 13, finally, from the way and manner in which the heathen are spoken of in ver. 10. On בעריּם comp. Ps. lxxiii. 22; on the whole verse, Ps. xcii. 7:—Berleb: "Ye *foolish*" expresses wonder: how sensible you are in that you disown your God, which, nevertheless, above every thing else, shows your ignorance. You have not even the spark of wisdom to believe in an all-seeing God. Reflect upon your stupidity and blindness! learn to mark how Satan mocks and deceives you!"—On ver. 9, Luther remarks: "He would thus give away what he does not possess himself." Arnd: "Learn to know God from the powers of your own body and soul. He who has made an understanding heart, should he not himself understand? he who has created a righteous heart, should he not himself be righteous? he who has made a compassionate heart, should he not himself have a father-heart?" We cannot translate he who has planted. The discourse is about a work of God which is in daily progress. *Should he not hear and see* every thing, and, therefore, also the scorn of the wicked, the sighs and sufferings of his own people.—In the first clause of ver. 10, the power of God over the spirits of the heathen, by which he lets his voice be heard in their

innermost depths, manifesting, as it does, that his being is elevated above all limits, is employed to show the folly of the assertion that he does not punish their deeds from ignorance of their crimes. The יסר occurs in the sense of to summon, to warn, a sense which it bears more frequently than that of punishment. It occurs in ver. 12, exactly in the same way, comp. Ps. ii. 10, and Prov. ix. 7, "he that *reproveth* a sinner begetteth to himself shame." Gen. xx. is in reality parallel, where the heathen Abimelech receives a similar warning from God, comp. especially ver. 6, "I held thee back from sinning against me," but particularly Rom. i. 20, ii. 14, 15. As the doctrine of an influence exercised by God upon the consciences of the heathen, from which the conclusion is here drawn that he beholds and punishes their deeds, is of rare occurrence in the Old Testament—a fact to be explained by the very depraved condition of the heathen around the Israelites, among whom few traces of such an influence could be seen —another translation has been thought of: shall not he who formerly chastised the heathen punish them also now? But the "formerly," or the "always," and the "now" would need in this case to be more distinctly marked. Even the "warning" suits much better in the parallel. For in the second clause, from an undeniable, subtile, and inward operation of God in reference to the heathen, a conclusion is drawn as to the folly of denying an operation of a more tangible and external kind. Shall not he to whom the heathen owe all their power of judging know and punish also their deeds.—In ver. 10 the proposition that God knows, and proportionally punishes the thoughts of men, and specially the plans of the wicked for the destruction of the righteous, is proved from the general relation of men to God: they are vanity, but he is Jehovah, Jahveh, the pure absolute Existence; comp. on the sense of Jahveh, Beitr: 2 P. 233 ss. Is. xl. 17 is parallel: "all the heathen are as nothing before him." The common translation is: the Lord knows the thoughts of the heathen that they (the thoughts) are vain, avail nothing. But this translation destroys the connection. The connection requires that something be said in opposition to the affirmation that God does not see, does not know, and, consequently, does not punish. The *knowing* comes into notice only as the condition of the punishing. The masc. pronoun המה is also against it. The mascu-

line cannot be placed *here*, instead of the feminine, as the usual form, Ew. § 184 c., because a masc. noun preceded, and ambiguity would thus be occasioned. Even in the parallel passages, Ps. xxxix. 5, 11, "all men are only vanity," lxii. 9, "only vanity are the children of men," הֶבֶל is used of men themselves.

Ver. 12–15.—Ver. 12. *Blessedness to the man whom thou, O Lord, admonishest, and teachest him out of thy law.* Ver. 13. *To give him rest against the days of adversity till the pit shall be dug for the wicked.* Ver. 14. *For the Lord will not reject his people; and his inheritance he will not forsake.* Ver. 15. *For to righteousness the right will return, and all the righteous shall follow it.*—Those who allow themselves to be admonished and taught by the Lord, in ver. 12, stand in opposition to the *foolish* among the people, who go to school with the blind ungodly *heathen*. The *object* of the instruction appears from the connection, and especially from ver. 13–15. Luther: "That the plans and doings of the ungodly are vain and do not last, although they are very confident of success, and carry things with such a high hand that they boast, sing, talk, gossip, and applaud. Here sense and nature can do nothing, and know not that such a way is nothing. For nature judges as it feels, and thinks no farther: it cannot see things which are future, and are as yet not in existence, it hangs upon the present. Therefore he says God must here be a master, and teach this. And blessed are those to whom he teaches it." The *law* appears here as the means which God uses in this instruction, the fountain out of which he draws it, and then satisfies with it by his Spirit the thirsty soul. It comes into notice in connection with *its doctrine of recompense* (comp. for example the passages to which the Psalmist himself had alluded in ver. 6), and *its rich consolatory promises* for the people of the Lord, whose end is always salvation, comp. for example Deut. xxxii. Lev. xxvi.—The Lord procures rest before or against the day of adversity, ver. 13, inasmuch as by his instruction and consolation he brings it about that these do not any more inwardly distress the righteous, and lead him to murmur, to despair, or to fall away. Comp. Ps. cxii. 8, "his heart is established, he is not afraid till he see his desire upon his enemies," Ps. xlix. 5, "wherefore should I fear in the days of evil, when the iniquity of my treaders down compasses me about?"—In

ver. 14 we have the basis of the declaration as to the blessedness of those who meet adversity in patience and quiet: the Lord may perhaps forsake his people *for a time* (comp. Jn vi. 13, Is. ii. 6), as a righteous punishment for forsaking *him*, Deut. xxxii. 15, but not *for ever*,—he again at his own time takes under his care his people and inheritance oppressed by the heathen, ver. 5. Arnd: "Lebanius, a sophist, asked a Christian: what is your carpenter's son doing? The Christian replied: he is making a coffin for Julian the tyrant. Immediately after this he was killed in battle and brought home in a coffin."—The *right*, ver. 15, which at present is inverted, Hab. i. 14, inasmuch as the wicked have the upper hand, the wicked devour the man who is more righteous than he, Hab. i. 13, is *brought back* at the proper time *to righteousness*, is again administered according to its rule. Arnd: "When a man suppresses the right, it is as if the sun were extinguished with water, and yet the sun is greater than the sea." The suffix in אחריו can only refer to the right brought back to righteousness. The righteous accompany it with the joy of their heart and with happy shouts: comp. the song of triumph of the church of the Lord over the fall of the King of Babylon in Is. xiv.

Ver. 16–23.—Ver. 16. *Who rises up for me against the evil-doers? Who stands up for me against the workers of iniquity?* Ver. 17. *Had not the Lord been my help, my soul had soon inhabited silence.* Ver. 18. *If I say "my foot slides," thy mercy, O Lord, holds me up.* Ver. 19. *In the multitude of my thoughts within me, thy consolations delight my soul.* Ver. 20. *Is the throne of wickedness in covenant with thee, which maketh misery as a law?* Ver. 21. *They storm at the soul of the righteous, and condemn innocent blood.* Ver. 22. *But the Lord is my tower, and my God the rock of my confidence.* Ver. 23. *And he recompenses to them their unrighteousness, and will requite them because of their wickedness, the Lord our God will requite them.*—Ver. 17 gives the answer to the question in ver. 16: the Lord is the only help of the Psalmist, of his church,—without him the church would be irremediably destroyed, comp. Ps. xxv. 16, "Lord, have mercy upon me, for I am *solitary*." *For me* = for my help. "With the wicked," in conflict with them. On התיצב to put oneself down in a place, to step forward, comp. at Ps. ii. 2.—The דומה in ver. 17, like the

דומיה in the Davidic Psalms, is *silence*, comp. at Ps. lxii. 1. Silence is what reigns in the noiseless kingdom of the dead, comp. Ps. xxxi. 17, דומה does not denote the *place* of silence either here or in Ps. lxii. 1. Silence itself appears poetically as a habitation. We must translate: my soul would soon inhabit silence (comp. in reference to the כמעט Ps. lxxxi. 14, and to the præterite Ew. § 135), not: has *already* inhabited, for that the כמעט cannot signify.—In reference to the sliding of the foot in ver. 18, comp. at Ps. lxvi. 9. Mercy *upholds* the Psalmist *inwardly*, or trust in mercy sets him up, for the *outward* help has not yet made its appearance, comp. ver. 17, 19.—On ver. 19, Luther: "He speaks of the many thoughts which one has in such a state of despair, how he could or might come out of it. Then he thinks this way and that way, and visits all holes and corners, but finds none. He therefore now says: when I was in such torture, and was killing myself with my own thoughts, when I sought comfort here and there and found none, then didst thou come with thy consolation and didst delight me."—In ver. 20 the יתברך is not Pü. but Kal, and the construction with the accusative is to be explained by observing that "to be bound together," here stands instead of "to be in covenant," comp. Ew. § 282. On הוות "wickedness," comp. at Ps. xci. 3. *As a law*,—properly "upon law," the על being not unfrequently a reference to the rule which this particular case follows, comp. Ges. Thes. p. 1025. Ew. § 217. Is. x. 1, ought to be compared as a parallel passage to the whole verse. The *sceptre of the wicked*, in Ps. cxxv. 3, corresponds to the *throne of iniquity*: for the sceptre of the wicked shall not rest upon the lot of the righteous. Many translate: which meditates mischief contrary to the law (Maurer: quae id agit ut omnes leges nostras perfringat). But עמל, suffering, is the standing expression for the misery which comes upon men as the result of violence and wickedness; and that it is to be taken in this sense here, is evident from ver. 21, which is to be considered as containing the developed sense, and therefore as a commentary, and also from the whole remaining contents of the Psalms, the subject of which generally is the suffering of the righteous.—On ver. 23, Luther: "He who believes this, and is taught of God, can be patient, can let the ungodly rage, and look forward to the end, and wait the time."

PSALM XCV.

The Psalmist exhorts the church of the Lord to praise with full heart God who alone is God, the Lord of the whole earth, ver. 1–5, devoutly to fall down before him, ver. 6, not to harden the heart, which ought to be obedient to him, as their fathers did once in the wilderness, and thereby shut themselves out from the land of promise, ver. 7–11.

The whole is complete in ten, which is divided by the five. In the middle there is an intercalary verse, which forms as it were the beating heart of the Psalm, contains the result gathered out of the first half, and forms the point of transition to the second.

A false division has often been occasioned by laying too great stress on the fact that the Lord is introduced speaking in ver. 8–11. This is really a matter of no importance; and there is hence no sufficient reason for violently applying this change to regulate the formal division.

The emphatic allusion to the example of the fathers, who, by their hardness of heart, shut themselves out from the land of promise, and especially the fact that the Psalm terminates with this allusion, have long ago given rise to the idea that the Psalm must have been composed in circumstances similar to those of the Israelites in the wilderness, in view of a glorious manifestation of the salvation of the Lord. This view is confirmed by the fact that this expectation is peculiar to the chain of Psalms, of which the Psalm before us forms one link, comp. at Ps. xciv. 1. All doubt disappears on comparing Ps. xcvi., which is bound up with our Psalm so as to form one pair; comp. the introduction to that Psalm. The reference also to the Messianic salvation was clearly and profoundly acknowledged by the author of the Epistle to the Hebrews: whose λέγων ἐν Δαβὶδ, however, is not to be viewed as a testimony for the special Davidic origin of the Psalm, but only as a designation of the whole taken from the author of the greater part.

We have therefore here before us an Old Testament "Rejoice ye pious." Behind the darkness of the approaching Chaldean catastrophe the Prophets perceived the approach, and the Psalmists led on by them excited the expectation of a clear light;

and hence took occasion to address earnest admonitions to the people to seek, by unreservedly giving themselves to the Lord, participation in this light, which is accompanied side by side with a consuming fire for the rebellious. As formerly in the wilderness, so here also the people appear on the way to their rest. For the great body who did not follow the admonition of the Psalmist, and did not know the time of their visitation, the Psalm is really an awfully fulfilled prophecy.

The Psalm has its full significance for the Christian Church, inasmuch as we stand in the same relation to the *second* coming of the Lord, of whose time and hour we know nothing, Matth. xxiv. 36, and which shall come on us as a thief in the night and as travail upon a woman with child, as the people of the Old Testament did to the first. The Psalm, moreover, has a peculiar significance for *our times*, in which there is so much to call up the thought that we are on the eve of some great catastrophe, and are about to meet the coming of the Lord with steps of majesty, "To day, if ye will hear his voice," sounds with peculiarly impressive tones in our ears.

Ver. 1–5.—Ver. 1. *Come, let us rejoice to the Lord, let us shout with joy to the rock of our salvation.* Ver. 2. *Let us anticipate his presence with songs of praise, let us shout to him with songs.* Ver. 3. *For a great God is the Lord, and a great King over all gods.* Ver. 4. *In whose hands are the foundations of the earth, and his are the heights of the mountains.* Ver. 5. *His is the sea, and he has made it, and his hands have spread out the dry land.*—That the exhortation to praise God in ver. 1 and 2 does not refer to a mere outward act of worship, but demands the *surrender of the heart*, which is the fountain equally of true love to God and of obedience to his commandments, is evident from the negative of the second corresponding to the positive of the first part of the Psalm : harden not your heart, &c. God is called the *Rock of salvation* as being its unchangeable foundation and faithful author ; comp. at Ps. xviii. 2—Ps. lxii. 7, xcii. 16, xciv. 22.—In reference to the קדם to anticipate, in ver. 2 (Vulg. praeoccupemus faciem ejus) comp. Ps. xxi. 3, lxxix. 8, lxxxviii. 13, "in the morning my prayer shall anticipate thee," and on the whole phrase קדם פנים also Ps. xvii. 13, lxxxix. 14. Calvin : "He demands haste in order that he may testify to believers that they should fulfil

this their duty with pleasure and zeal. This exhortation presupposes that indolence which is natural to us when God calls us to render thanks." Ps. lvii. 8, for example, is really parallel, where the Psalmist promises that he shall always awaken the morning with his thanks and praise. The common translation, "let us come before thy face," is a mistake, and cannot be defended etymologically.—That ver. 3 does not lead to the supposition of the real existence of the heathen deities is evident from Ps. xcvi. 4, 5, where the corresponding expression, "for great is the Lord and very glorious, dreadful above all gods," is followed by, "for all the Gods of the nations are nothing, but the Lord has made the heavens." The words are to be explained from the contrast intended to be drawn to the way of the world, which grants to Jehovah only the importance of a *small* God, and places him far beneath *its own* gods. In like manner, in ver. 4, 5, they are denied not only the place of supremacy, but even existence itself. For the Lord has *every thing*, they therefore have *nothing;* and a God who has nothing has no existence. Finally, what is here said as to what God is, is said in reference to the approaching glorious *manifestation* of this his being; because as shall be the case speedily through the unveiling of the glory of the Lord, his wonder and his salvation, Ps. xcvi. 2, 3, shall come to light, &c.—That the Psalmist in ver. 4 and 5 brings forward only the dominion of the Lord over the *earth* is clear from Ps. xcvi. 5, where as a supplementary idea heaven is spoken of. In reference to the earth, the deepest depths and the highest heights are first placed in opposition in ver. 4, and after that in ver. 5, the sea and the dry land. מחקר is what is sought for, the concealed deep, in opposition to what meets the eye; comp. חקר תהום *the searching of the flood*, the innermost bottom of the sea, in Job xxxviii. and Jer. xxxi. 37, "when the heavens above were measured, and the foundations of the earth were *searched* (or explored)." "On תועפות, a noun formed from the 3 fem. fut. in Hiph., properly "that which makes weary," "the stretch," comp. the author's treatise on Balaam in Num. xxiii. 22, "The stretchings of the mountains" in parallel with "the searchings of the earth," is a poetical expression for the highest summits of the mountains, which can be reached only by a stretch or effort. However deep man may penetrate into the depths, or however high he may ascend into the heights, he is

still within the dominion of God—he cannot go beyond his boundaries.

Ver. 6. *Come, let us worship and fall done, let us kneel before the Lord our Creator.* We have here before us the culminating point of the Psalm, the festive moment of devotion "when the bells ring in curia regis." This joy where the heart is full of it seeks also its bodily expression.[a] Still even this is only desired as the expression of what fills the heart. This is manifest from what *follows*, where as the consequences of kneeling and falling down, it appears that the worshipper listens to the voice of God and does not harden his heart. Hence in the shell of the kneeling there must be contained the kernel of unreserved *surrender*, which manifests itself in willing obedience. God is called the *Creator* of Israel as the author of his being, in every respect generally human, and specially Israelitish; comp. in reference to the latter the fundamental passage, Deut. xxxii. 6, and the 7th verse of this Psalm. The 5th verse shews that the former is not to be excluded.

Ver. 7–11.—Ver. 7. *For he is our God, and we the people of his pasture, and sheep of his hand. To-day, if ye will listen to his voice!* Ver. 8. *Harden not your heart like Meribah, like the day of Massa in the wilderness.* Ver. 9. *When your fathers tempted me, proved me, and still saw my doing.* Ver. 10. *Forty years was I disgusted with that people and said: they are people of erring heart, and they know not my ways.* Ver. 11. *So that I swore in my wrath: they shall not come to my rest.*—In reference to *the people of his pasture* in ver. 7, comp. at Ps. lxxx. 12, lxxiv. 1. *Sheep of his hand* are such as he guides and protects with his hand, comp. Ps. xxiii. 3, 4, c. 3. The "to-day" stands emphatically foremost, intimating that the present is a time of great *decision*. As the אם is always a conditional, and never an optative particle (comp. at Ps. lxxxi. 8), we cannot translate "would that you heard," but must rather, as also with the אם in ver. 11, supply the proposition, "thus he will bless you his people." The אם occurs not unfrequently in this way, for example, Ps. lxxxi. 8, "Hear, O my people, and let me

a Calvin: "This also is to be observed, that the Psalmist not only treats of the gratitude of the heart, but also demands an outward profession of piety. For it is expressed in these words that the faithful do not perform their duty unless they offer themselves up as a sacrifice to God openly, by kneeling and other signs."

testify to thee, O Israel, if thou will hearken unto me," where we must supply, "it will go well with you." In Zech. vi. 15, "and it happens, if ye listen to the voice of the Lord your God," there must be supplied, "ye shall share in all these good things, and Messiah will take away your sins as your high priest, and give you prosperity as your King," compare the Christol. on the passage. But the fundamental passage, Ex. xxiii. 21, 22, is much more worth comparing, where the clause wanting is added: "beware of him (the angel whom the Lord will send before you, and who will lead you to Canaan), and listen to his voice . . . for if thou shalt listen to his voice, I will do all that I say, and I will become an enemy unto thine enemies, and an adversary unto thy adversaries." This earnest voice which went forth on a *former* occasion, goes forth now again at a new critical moment to Israel, on the eve of a new leading through the wilderness into Canaan, through suffering to salvation. Would that they now laid it better to heart! Against connecting the clause with what *follows* (Luther: to-day, if you will hear his voice, you will not harden your hearts), we have besides that fundamental passage and the parallel passage, Ps. lxxxi. 8, the accents, the change of person and the שִׁמְעוּ with בְּ, which can never mean "to hear something," but "to listen to something." The whole verse has in reality a hortatory character: listen to-day to his voice, that thus his blessing may be imparted to you, in harmony with what follows, and in parallel with the "come, let us rejoice" of the first part, and as the more full development of this, "come, let us worship" of the 6th verse—not only our verse but the whole paragraph, ver. 7–11, is pointed out as such by the "for:" *for*, inasmuch as he is our God, &c., listen to his voice, that thus it may go well with you, harden not your heart, &c., and thus render to him the worship which he desires, which consists not only in a mere bending of the knee, which even the irrational beasts can render, but in an unqualified surrender of the heart.—In ver. 8, "as Meribah, as the day of Massah," stands concisely for "as it happened at Meribah and on the day of Massah." Allusion is made to Ex. xvii. 1, ss.; not however to Num. xx. 1, ss. For it is only in the former passage that the place has the name Massah and Meribah, comp. Beitr. 3., p. 379. Israel's offence at that place was neither their first nor their most remarkable offence. That it is selected from the number of all the rest and

made to stand as representative of them, is to be explained alone from the quality of the two names which are monuments of their *striving* with the Lord and of their *tempting* him. In reference to אשר in the sense of where, ver. 9. comp. at lxxxiv. 3. That the last words of the verse are not, with many expositors, to be referred to the *punishment*, of which mention is first made in ver. 11, but that they are intended to heighten the guilt, to bring the criminality more into view, is evident from the fundamental passage, Num. xiv. 22, "for all the men who saw my glory and my signs which I did in Egypt and in the wilderness, and still tempted me these ten times, and did not hearken to my voice." The גם, also, points to the aggravating circumstances connected with the proving. The more manifestly God makes himself known, so much the more disgraceful is it, when we are in trouble, to put him first to the proof: as if he must first show himself beyond his true Godhead.—The expression, "I was disgusted," in ver. 10, does not denote the punishment, but points to the greatness of the sin. For whole forty years the Israelites acted in such a manner[a] that their God could only look upon them with displeasure and aversion. By the דור, *race*, is meant here the whole generation, in opposition to separate corrupt individuals, comp. Deut. i. 35, "There shall not one of these men of this evil *generation* see the good land," &c., ii. 14, "till the whole *generation* of the men of war be dead. By the want of the article, this contrast is rendered more prominent. The second clause serves the same object as "still they saw my work," in ver. 9. The conduct of Israel was thus inexcusable, inasmuch as they had the ways of God, that is, his glorious conduct, before their eyes, from which they might have learned *better;* but they perceived this only with their bodily eyes, and did not lay it to heart. The fundamental passage serves for illustration, Deut. xxix. 3, "And the Lord did not give you an heart to know, and eyes to see, and ears to hear, till this day;" before this the discourse had been of the great wonders and signs of the Lord on behalf of his people, and of his gracious guidance, corresponding to "his ways" here.—On the אשר, *so that*, in ver. 11, comp. Ew. § 327. The *oath* here

[a] Calvin: The circumstance that God struggled so long with their wickedness without effect aggravates its guilt. For it sometimes happens that petulance will boil up for a little and immediately afterwards subside.

spoken of went forth, when, after the sending forth of the spies, the rebelliousness of the Israelites rose to formal *revolt*. The אם is taken from the fundamental passage, Num. xiv. 23, "if they shall see the land which I sware unto their fathers," ver. 30, "If ye shall come into the land for which I have lifted up my hand to make you dwell in it," Deut. i. 35, "*if* one of these men, this wicked generation, shall see the good land," &c. The מנוחה, a *place of rest*, and their *rest*, comp. at Ps. xxiii. 2, must, according to the fundamental passage, where the *land* corresponds to it, and according to Deut. xii. 9, "For ye are not yet come to the *place of rest*, and to the inheritance which the Lord thy God gives thee," have the *former* sense. The close of the Psalm is serious and gloomy. The Psalmist anticipates that the melancholy example of the past will be repeated in the future yet once more, that Israel will yet another time fail to know the time of his visitation.

PSALM XCVI.

Let the whole earth praise the Lord, who has bestowed upon it glorious salvation, ver. 1–3, for he is in his glory worthy of this praise, ver. 4–6. May all the families of the heathen worship and reverence the Lord, ver. 7–9. For he has entered upon his dominion over all the earth, and all nations stand under his righteous and salutary government, to the joy of the whole world, ver. 10–12. At the conclusion, in ver. 13, there is the sum of the whole Psalm: the Lord cometh to judge the earth.

The thrice-repeated "give," in ver. 7 and 8, corresponding to the thrice-repeated "sing" of the beginning, divides the Psalm into two halves, each of six verses. These are divided again into two strophes of three verses. The three is marked out as the fundamental number by the three-fold "sing" and "give."

The formal arrangement announces that the Psalm, along with the one that precedes it, forms one pair. The extra verse here corresponds to one deficient in the preceding Psalm; the eleven and the thirteen together make up twenty-four, double the significant twelve, so that the numbers of the individual Psalms designedly devoid of meaning make up, when taken together, a

significant number. The contents also lead us to the same result, the relation of Ps. xcv. to Ps. xcvi. The connection of both is seen in Is. ii. 5, where, on the announcement of the reception of the heathen into the kingdom of God, ver. 2–4, there follows an exhortation to Israel, not to exclude himself by his sin from the glorious salvation of the future, in which the whole earth shall participate. The only difference is, that the arrangement here is inverted. The salvation, for which the Psalmist exhorts the heathen to praise the Lord, is a *future* one, and appears as present only in so far as the Psalmist transposes himself into the future—the present is not real but *ideal.* This is clear from the nature of the thing, as, during the whole existence of the Old Testament dispensation, such a salvation encompassing the whole earth never existed, and the dominion of the Lord over the whole earth here represented as having arrived every where else, appears as the object of *desire* and *hope*, and more particularly from the 12th verse, where the prophet leaves the point of view of the ideal, and passes on to that of the real present : *then* shall rejoice. From this fully ascertained fact that the Psalmist transfers himself here into the future, in reference to the salvation spoken of, and that with so much earnestness, that he throughout addresses the heathen living in it, and exhorts the heathen who, in his own day, knew nothing of the Lord, to thank him for a salvation for which at the time there had not been made the least preparation, it follows that he may very well have adopted the same procedure also in Ps. xciv., in reference to the misery with which Israel was threatened, and which was to precede the development of that salvation. Further, if it cannot be denied that the Psalmist here transfers himself into the future, with what truth can the genuineness of the second part of Isaiah be objected to, on the ground that the prophet's point of view is not that of Isaiah, inasmuch as it belongs to *prophecy*, to look upon the future as present much more than it does *to lyric poetry*, which could be induced to adopt such a style only in imitation of prophecy.

There can be no doubt (comp. the induction of proof at ver. 1) that the Psalmist was stimulated by the second part of Isaiah to compose this poem, that the Psalm is a testimony of that inward movement of soul which was excited among the people by these

prophecies, at a time when they were advancing with rapid strides to a period of severe suffering. It is the less possible to overlook this connection between the poetry of the Psalms and prophecy, as we observe in prophecy itself a transition to Psalm-poetry. We may compare, for example, Is. xii. and Hab. iii.

The exhortation "sing to the Lord a new song," could only be responded to by the heathen after the salvation which forms the subject of the poem had arisen. Behind the exhortation, however, addressed to the heathen, to praise God, there lies concealed another addressed to the Israelites. The church of the Lord should be raised by this Psalm to joyful hope, should be awakened to an active zeal to serve with uprightness the Lord who had formed such a mighty purpose with her. She beheld indeed the heathen preparing to destroy the kingdom of the Lord in the small corner which still remained to her. But at the same time she beheld at a greater distance with the eye of the Spirit of the Lord, the Lord himself coming, in the full glory of his being, to judge the whole earth, to judge the world in righteousness, and the nations in faithfulness.

As the promise which forms the basis of our Psalm is as yet unfulfilled in its whole extent, the whole fulness of the heathen have not yet entered into the kingdom of God, the Psalm is fraught with importance to us, not only in regard to its general thought, but even as to its very language. It is a *missionary-hymn* for all ages of the church; and it becomes more and more appropriate to our times in proportion as the heathen begin to respond to the call, "Sing to the Lord a new song," and in proportion as we find in the melancholy condition of the church at home occasion to look with a hopeful eye towards the heathen world.

On the relation of the Psalm to 1 Chron. xvi. 23 ss., comp. at Ps. cvi.

Ver. 1–6.—Ver. 1. *Sing to the Lord a new song, sing all the world.* Ver. 2. *Sing to the Lord; praise his name; make known from day to day his salvation.* Ver. 3. *Recount among the heathen his glory, among all the nations his wonders.* Ver. 4. *For great is the Lord, and very glorious, dreadful above all gods.* Ver. 5. *For all the gods of the nations are null, and the Lord has made the heavens.* Ver. 6. *Majesty and*

glory are before him, might and beauty in his sanctuary.—On the "new song," ver. 1, comp. at Ps. xxxiii. 3. The first clause, however, is not at all borrowed from this passage, but from Is. xlii. 10, "*Sing unto the Lord a new song*, his praise from the end of the earth." This is clear from the literal agreement; from the circumstance that the *following* words of Isaiah are re-echoed in the second clause here: that the exhortation is here, as in Isaiah, addressed to the *heathen*, which is not the case in Ps. xxxiii., that the whole contents of the Psalm, as also those of Ps. xcviii., which begins with the same words, are nearly allied to the second part of Isaiah; that in our Psalm, as also in Isaiah, the irrational creation is, immediately after the rational, exhorted to praise God, and that the sea and its fulness, in ver. 11, is literally borrowed from Is. xlii. 10. The verbal reference to Isaiah is designedly placed at the *beginning*, for the purpose of pointing out the prophetical fountain from which the lyric stream has flowed. The new song occurs in a more developed form in Rev. v. 9, 10. On the last clause of ver. 2, comp. Is. lii. 7, "how beautiful upon the mountains are the feet of the *messenger of joy*,.....who maketh known *salvation*, who saith to Zion, thy king reigneth" (the Lord reigneth here in ver. 10), and also ver. 10, "all the ends of the earth see the salvation of our God." The בשר, in its reference to the future Messianic salvation, is peculiar to the second part of Isaiah: גבר, also, is one of the favourite expressions of that writer. "From day to day" points to the greatness and the permanent character of the salvation; Calvin: "may this salvation not be frail or transitory." The exhortation, "make known," in ver. 3, which is addressed to the *heathen themselves*, for no others had been spoken of, and the fundamental passages, are clear against the translation, "they make known" (imper.), Is. lx. 6, "all they of Seba shall come and make known the praise of the Lord," and especially lxvi. 18, 19, "the time comes for assembling all heathen and tongues, and they come and see my glory, and I point them out and send from them runners to the heathen to Tarsus," &c. There also the heathen are the messengers of salvation to the heathen; those who have themselves seen the glory of the Lord go out to make it known to others. *His glory*, which is now unveiled, so that all flesh sees it at once, Is. xl. 5.

" For," ver. 4, is " as his glory and his wonders shew." The first half is literally from Ps. xlviii. 1. The second half alludes to Ps. xlvii. 2. Ps. xcv. 3, xcvii. 9, xcix. 2, are parallel. The *gods* are those whom the heathen had hitherto served. Dreadful, at the time when the Psalm was composed, was the pressure of these Elohim against Jehovah and his people, of the many against the one; but the Psalmist looks upon this pressure with joyful composure, he knows that the One will eventually gain the victory. Calvin: " The true worshippers of God had, at that time, a great and severe conflict with the mass of superstition with which the whole world was filled. For the true God was concealed in Judea, as it were, in a dark corner.....As each country had its own particular gods, they obtained also in other places acknowledgment, only the true God was deprived of his honour.....It follows that, from the unanimity of the multitude, nothing can be concluded in favour of the truth of a religion. Even innumerable men may therefore," &c. The *angels* whom Stier would still understand by the Elohim, are excluded by ver. 5, and also by the retrospective nature of the expression. The אֱלִילִים is, as is evident from Job xiii. 4, Zech. xi. 17, not an adjective, but a substantive: *nullities*. This expression, according to Hoffman (Prophecy and its fulfilment, i. p. 120), who maintains the real existence of the heathen deities, must have, not an absolute, but only a relative sense: " if they would stand in opposition to God the Creator, or if men associate them with him, they are אֱלִילִים." But, in opposition to this, we have the two fundamental passages of the Pentateuch, Lev. xix. 4, " ye shall not turn you to the Elilim, and ye shall not make to yourselves molten gods;" xxvi. 1, " ye shall make no Elilim and carved image, and a molten image ye shall not set up,"—passages, at the foundation of which there lies the supposition, that the heathen gods have no other than a material existence, and in which, consequently, the basis is laid down on which may rest the assertion of their nullity. In the passage, Is. xli. 24, which serves as an exposition of the Elilim, " behold ye are of nothing," is preceded by " ye do neither good nor evil," as proving that the non-existence of the idols is an absolute one. It is on the supposition that the idols have *no* existence except the images that the whole vigorous controversy rests, which is carried on through-

out the second part of Isaiah against idol-worship. In the New Testament, the non-existence of heathen gods is expressly taught, 1 Cor. viii. 4–6. 1 Cor. x. 19–21, does not prove anything in reference to their real existence, which, in ver. 19, is distinctly denied, but in reference to the demoniac back-ground, which is concealed behind the fore-ground of the null idolatry. Individual idols are the product of human imagination and of human hands, but the system, as a whole, stands under the direction and the influence of the powers of darkness, of which, besides this particular passage, according to the whole tenor of scripture doctrine, there cannot be the shadow of a doubt; comp. the Beitr. on the Pentateuch, i. p. 248. The exclusive deity of the Lord is here founded on the creation of the heaven, as in Ps. xcv. 4, and on his power over the earth.—On הוד and הדר, majesty and glory, in ver. 6, comp. at Ps. xlv. 3. *Before him*, —as his inseparable attendants, comp. Job xli. 14. On תפארת, *ornament, glory*, at Ps. lxxi. 8. The חדוה, which is substituted instead of it, in Chronicles, refers to the festival connected with the use of the Psalm on that occasion, and to the musical establishment of David, comp. ver. 4 ss. 37 ss. The question whether the sanctuary of the Lord is the *heavenly* (comp., for example, Ps. xxix. 9, Ps. xi. 4, Is. vi.) or the *earthly* sanctuary, is an improper one. The sanctuary of the Lord is wherever he is. The "his place" of Chron. is a good exposition. Even the earthly sanctuary is, by its inhabitant, high and lifted up: comp. at Ps. lxxviii. 69.

Ver. 7–12.—Ver. 7. *Give to the Lord, ye generations of the people, give to the Lord glory and might.* Ver. 8. *Give to the Lord the glory of his name, bring offerings and come into his courts.* Ver. 9. *Worship the Lord in holy beauty, tremble before him, all lands.* Ver. 10. *Say to the Lord: the Lord reigneth, therefore the earth stands firm, it moves not, he judges the nations in righteousness.* Ver. 11. *Let the heaven rejoice and the earth shout, let the sea roar and its fulness.* Ver. 12. *Let the field rejoice, and every thing which is in it, then shall all the trees of the forest shout for joy.*—On ver. 7–9, comp. Ps. xxix. 1, 2, "give to the Lord ye sons of God, give to the Lord glory and power; give to the Lord the glory of his name, worship the Lord in holy beauty." The quotations from this

Davidic Psalm is a literal one, with the difference that two clauses are added, and that, in place of the sons of God, the *tribes of the heathen* are addressed, with marked reference to Gen. xii. 3, " and all the nations of the earth shall be blessed in thee." The quotation from Ps. xxix. is not at all a quotation from memory. It lays down a strong basis for the announcement there made, as to the conversion of all the heathen. He whom the angels above praise with their song, must also, in future days, be praised by the harmonious song of the inhabitants of this earth. What God already is in heaven, is, according to the words, " as in heaven so also upon the earth," a prophecy of what he shall in future days be on the earth. The difference between heaven and earth can only be a temporary one. The manifestation of the holy arm of the Lord must remove that difference in his own time. The נישׂא מנחה is used of the bringing of gifts of allegiance to earthly sovereigns, in 2 Sam. viii. 2, " and the Moabites became David's servants, and brought gifts ;" comp. at Ps. lxviii. 29, lxxii. 10, lxxvi. 11. The *courts*, Ps. xcii. 14, c. 4.—The *trembling*, ver. 9, is the natural feeling induced by a sight of the glory of God, even in those who have nothing to fear; comp. " may both joy and trembling be now found in me," in the sacramental hymn, " Adorn thyself O blessed soul." The *trembling*, more than any thing else, points to the glory of the approaching revelation of God, and hence stands very appropriately at the end of the whole exhortation to praise and worship God.—In ver. 10, there is the revelation of the Lord, which fills the whole earth with praise and worship, and which the heathen who first receive it, are with joyful lips to impart to other heathens.[a] The verse rests upon Ps. xciii. 1, " *The Lord reigneth*, he is clothed with majesty, he is clothed, the Lord girdeth himself with power, therefore *the earth standeth firm, it does not move.*" The government of the Lord shall again make firm the earth, which had been shaken to its innermost basis by the sins of men (comp. Ps. lxxv. 3, " the earth with all its inhabitants is dissolved," as it were, loosened, in consequence of the con-

[a] Venema: As this exhortation (ver. 7–9) takes for granted that the God of Israel had made himself known, even among the Gentiles, and is based on that manifestation, the Psalmist immediately subjoins that this would be done, or had been done, by means of an exhortation to proclaim God as king.

querors of the world), shall restore to it order, salvation, and peace; nation shall no longer lift up the sword against nation, and they shall not learn war any more," Is. ii. In Ps. xciii. the establishing of the earth follows through the omnipotence of God; and here by his righteous and righteousness promoting judgment: so that the two passages thus mutually supplement each other. It is only the righteous omnipotence and the omnipotent righteousness that can produce such effects. On "the Lord reigneth," = "he has entered upon his kingdom," comp. besides the passages already quoted at Ps. xciii., Is. xxiv. 23, also Is. lvii. 7, "who saith to Zion: thy God reigneth." The pre-existence of such fundamental passages is presupposed by the frequent repetition of the expression before us. These alone are sufficient to set aside the reference to any fact which had already taken place in the time of the Psalmist. The last clause attributes to the *Lord* what is elsewhere generally said of the Messiah, comp. for example Is. xi., Ps. lxxii. The Lord shall even by the "God-warrior," Is. ix. 5, judge the nations in righteousness.—The תגל shews that the futures in ver. 11, and in the first half of ver. 12, are to be taken as optatives. The exhortation, however, has for its basis the expectation that what is desired shall happen; and the transition to the expression of this in the second half of ver. 12 is a soft and easy one. The fundamental passages are Is. xliv. 23, lv. 12. There is no necessity for supposing a reference to a participation by the creation itself, as in Rom. viii. 21. The living creatures in this case would have been named first. The earth standing in the middle is in contrast on the one hand to the *heaven*, and on the other to the *sea*. The *field* and the *forest* stand over against each other, on the dry land, as in Ps. xcviii. 8, floods and mountains.—The expression, "*then* shall rejoice," in ver. 12, shews that the exhortation "let the heaven rejoice," &c., was spoken from an ideal present,—a point of view which the Psalmist here leaves, comp. the אז in Is. xxxv. 5, 6, Ps. cxxvi. 2.[a]

Ver. 13. *Before the Lord, for he comes, for he comes to judge the earth, he shall judge the world in righteousness, and the nations in faithfulness.*—The repeated "for he comes," which so significantly expresses the joyful expectation of a glorious good,

[a] Already Muis: This particle denotes future time, and looks far forward.

for which the heart of the Psalmist in his bosom so ardently longed, is omitted in Chronicles, which is characteristic of the version of the poem given there. It is also wanting at the conclusion of Ps. xcviii. For such an expression of emotion does not admit of repetition, and would appear artificial. The שפט, as is manifest from the fundamental passage Is. ii. 4, particularly from the construction with בין, and the parallel הוכיח, has not the sense of "to reign," but that of "to judge." The judging, however, is such as affords matter of *joy* to the righteous, ver. 1, it is not a retributive but a *gracious* judging, by which controversies are adjusted and prevented, and the law of love is introduced into the lives of the people, comp. the fundamental passage.[a] The language does not apply to the "judgment of the world" as the "punishment of idolatry." The *faithfulness* of God stands in contrast to the faithlessness of man, their want of trust-worthiness, and their deceit, the reign of which on the earth can be destroyed only by God acting out his own faithfulness, and setting it up as a model.

PSALM XCVII.

The Lord appears for judgment in terrible majesty, ver. 1–3, and this judgment is exercised by him: all nations behold his glory, ver. 4–6. This serves to put to shame the worshippers of false gods, but it affords to Zion heartfelt joy, for her God shows himself therein as the God of the whole earth, as infinitely exalted above the gods whom the world serves, ver. 7–9. In looking forward to such a future, may Sion, in the midst of trying trouble, continue to hate what is evil, ver. 10–12.

The twelve verses of the Psalm fall into two halves, each of which consists of two strophes of three verses. In the first we have the *appearing* of God and his *deeds*, and in the second we learn how these should be received by men on their approach, and how believers in looking at them should conduct themselves.

The text here consists of the words of Isaiah, "the Lord

[a] Calvin: "Hence it follows that it is only by the light of the justice and the truth of God that the depravity and hypocrisy natural to men are dissipated and cleared away."

reigneth," placed at the head of the Psalm, and to which the Psalmist looks on the eve of a time of great oppression, as to a clear light, which shines at the end of a long dark cavern, and which he opposes to the cry of the world, which may be soon expected, "the king of Babylon reigns," or "Bell and Nebo reign." He brings forward, however, a new view of the reign of the Lord. The language here does not apply to the conversion of the worshippers of idols to the living God, but singly and alone to judgment on the idolatrous world, by which its pride will be completely humbled, and with which Sion's salvation is connected. This figure of the indignant judge meets us in the whole of the first half. Nothing but shame is the portion of the worshippers of idols in ver. 7. Sion, according to ver. 8, only hears of it and is glad.

The beginning of the fulfilment of the hopes expressed here took place at the destruction of Babylon, and the deliverance of Israel connected with it; comp. Is. xlvi. These hopes, however, in their main import, are *Messianic*. The appearance of Christ was of the nature of a judgment even for those among the heathen who became obedient to the gospel; the nullity of their whole previous existence became thereby apparent, and, in place of their pride and high-minded contempt of Sion, there appeared deep shame. While, however, behind the judgment, which is alone brought prominently forward in our Psalm, the *grace* was concealed, which comes clearly forward in other passages, and especially in the preceding Psalm, the view which is here the only predominant one, comes forward, in other passages, alone in its power, for those who, like Julian for example, will know nothing of "the Lord reigneth." Even in our day the hopes here expressed are in the act of fulfilment. The exclamation, "the Lord reigneth," always sounds forth anew; the church will continue to call it out to the naked and to the clothed world, to the worshippers of wooden and of imaginary gods, till it shall have reached to full and absolute truth, and all the kingdoms of the earth have become the kingdom of the Lord and his anointed.

The prophetic character of the Psalm has been acknowledged in many ways. There has always been an inclination to generalize its contents. Thus, according to Koster and Maurer, the import of ver. 1–6 is merely: "Jehovah is king and judge of the

world." This view depends upon an incorrect sense of the clause, "the Lord reigneth," and is negatived by the reference to the appearances at the giving of the law, and to the fundamental passages in Ps. xviii. and in Micah. This reference shows that the language applies to a future appearance of the Lord to judgment. Finally, "Sion hears, &c.," in ver. 8, leads very decidedly to *facts* or *events*.

According to Ewald, Ps. xciii. and the one before us are "joyous-leaping overflowings of the clear, far-looking, lively disposition" of the times immediately after the return from the captivity, "songs of praise upon the now well-grounded and eternally-abiding dominion of Jahve;" he interprets historically ver. 4 ss. and refers these to the divine manifestation which had just taken place. This construction may be easily disposed of; it destroys the organization of the Psalm, overlooks the real ground of the transition from the preter. to the fut. (compare ver. 4), and receives its fatal blow from the weapon which Amyraldus wielded against the reference made by several expositors[a] to the victories of David. Still, even though the Psalm be considered as purely prophetic, it cannot belong to the times shortly after the return from the captivity. The disposition of the people was not then so "bright and full of life," that the Psalm could be considered as its product. The deliverance at that time was far behind their expectation, and the prophets had enough to do to combat the *despondency* and the *murmuring obstinacy* which got possession of men's minds. But (what is decisive), our Psalm leans throughout, and to a greater extent than the preceding and following Psalms, upon quotations from the more ancient sacred scriptures; it may be said to be distinctively a piece of Mosaic work; it points, by this intelligent string of old sayings, to the comprehensive character of the approaching revelation of the Lord, in which all the traits of the earlier history and prophecy were about to meet. Now all these numerous references are taken from writings earlier than the captivity;

[a] "These contained truly great and brilliant materials for celebrating divine virtues in splendid and magnificent words. Yet if they are compared with the magnificent things contained in this Psalm, the difference is such, as if a comparison were instituted would be the case if such a triumph were decreed to a general for having stormed a little town, as was celebrated by Julius Cæsar upon conquering Gahl. There is, most assuredly, no proportion between these things."

and there is all the less probability in this being accidental, as the whole series of Psalms, of which the one before us forms a part (Ps. xci.–c.), leads to the same result.

The more exact consideration of the allusions and quotations in this Psalm, and of the whole little collection to which it belongs, is of importance in another point of view. It shews how false is the idea which Ewald, in particular, has pushed to extremities, of a general loss of sacred literature. We can follow, in this Psalm, the references from verse to verse; no verse remains without its manifest fundamental passage. This can be explained only by the fact, that the sacred writings have come down to us entire.

Ver. 1–6.—Ver. 1. *The Lord reigneth, let the earth rejoice, let the multitude of the islands be glad.* Ver. 2. *Clouds and darkness are round about him, righteousness and right are the basis of his throne.* Ver. 3. *Fire goes before him and burns up his enemies round about.* Ver. 4. *His lightnings enlightened the world: the earth saw and trembled.* Ver. 5. *The mountains melt like wax before the Lord, before the Lord of the whole earth.* Ver. 6. *The heavens declare his righteousness, and all nations see his glory.*—In reference to the abrupta regni a deo suscepti proclamatio, "the Lord reigneth," in ver. 1, comp. at Ps. xciii. 1, xcvi. 10, and "may the earth rejoice," at Ps. xcvi. 11. The exhortation to the earth to triumph, and to the islands to rejoice, leads, at first sight, to the inference, that the reign of the Lord will bring salvation also to the heathen.[a] But such exhortations not unfrequently occur in cases where reference is made *directly* only to salvation for Sion (comp. Deut. xxxii. 43, at Ps. xviii. 49, Ps. xlvii.); and, in our Psalm, the heathen nowhere appear as the objects of salvation, but as the objects of judgment on the part of God. The expression, "let the earth rejoice," assuredly opens up, indirectly, even for the heathen, a joyous prospect. For it takes for granted, that the God of Israel is the God of the whole earth, who must have compassion upon *all*, whose deeds on behalf of any par-

[a] Calvin: "By inviting men to joy he sufficiently declares, that wherever God reigns, salvation and full felicity, at the same time, shine forth. In calling, however, the whole world to a common joy, he means that the kingdom of God, which at that time had been shut up within the narrow boundaries of Judea, would become much more wide, as it would extend even to the Gentiles."

ticular part are always prophecies for the whole, who can only bless his people in order that all the nations of the earth may be blessed in them. The אוּרִים on the basis of Gen. x. 5, and especially of Ps. lxxii. 10, is a favourite expression of Isaiah, particularly in the second part, (in the first part xxiv. 15), who dwells with peculiar delight upon the relation of the heathen world to the approaching glorious revelations of the Lord. Chapter xliv. 10, 12, is particularly appropriate where the islands and their inhabitants are exhorted to sing to the Lord because of his deeds on behalf of Israel, while in other passages the islands themselves appear as participators of the salvation.—The first clause of ver. 2 is taken from Deut. v. 19, "these words spake the Lord to the whole congregation on the mount out of the midst of the fire of *the cloud* and of *the darkness*," comp. Ex. xix. 16, 18, Ps. xviii. 9, 11. The appearances at the giving of the law had a symbolical character. They were intended to fill the heart with holy awe in presence of the heavenly judge, revealing as they did behind the foreground of words of rebuke, a background of deeds of retribution, comp. Ps. l. 3. This prophecy contained in these appearances is now in the way of being fulfilled. The Lord appears surrounded by dark clouds which make known his wrath and hold out to view the breaking forth of a storm of lightning and thunder. The appearances at the giving of the law form in particular a commentary on the words of the Ten Commandments: "Thou shalt have no other Gods before me: thou shalt not make any *graven image* . . . . . thou shalt not bow down to them nor serve them, *for I the Lord thy God am a jealous God.*" Ver 7 of this Psalm is to be compared with this. The wrath of God then threatened in words and in symbol to the worshippers of false gods and images, is here made manifest. The second half of the verse, "righteousness and right are the basis of his throne," is from Ps. lxxxix. 14. If the dominion of God exists on the domain of right and righteousness, the heathen may well tremble, because they have trampled right and righteousness under foot in their relations to the Israelites: a *righteous* judgment is for them a destroying judgment.—The first clause of ver. 3 is from Ps. l. 3, "fire burns before him;" comp. what is observed on that passage upon fire as a symbol of the divine wrath. In the second clause, the expression, "and burns up his enemies round about,"

is to be understood only virtually, "as soon as they present themselves before him," (comp. at Ps. xviii. 8, Delitzsch on Hab. iii. 5), for ver. 1–3 have to do only with the appearance of the Lord; in itself the effects which flow from it are first described in ver. 4–6.—Ver. 4. is from Ps. lxxvii. 18, "lightnings lightened the world, the earth trembled and shook." The reference to the fundamental passage has here and in ver. 5 occasioned the transition from the future to the preterite, which stands as a prophet. pret. Even this transition shews that our passage is borrowed, and that Ps. lvii. 18 is the original passage. On ראתה comp. Ps. lvii. 16.—On ver. 5 comp. Micha i. 4, "and the mountains flowed down under him and the valleys were cleft, as wax before the fire." The preter. stands there also proph. The words which there belong to the declaration of the judgment upon Israel are here employed as part of the description of the judgment upon the heathen world, of which that upon Israel was a matter-of-fact prophecy, comp. 1 Pet. iv. 17. The mountains are named individually as being the foremost and the highest parts of the earth. Berleb: "Even the mountains of human height and pride, the heights of human intellect and vanity, and also the kingdoms of the world." The expression, "the Lord of the whole earth," is from Micah iv. 13.—The first half of ver. 6 is from Ps. l. 6. The heavens make known the righteousness of God there, in so far as his judging *word* making known his righteousness, and here in so far as his judging *deed* proceeds from them. Arnd: "The heavens made known his righteousness when brimstone and fire were rained from heaven upon Sodom." The righteousness of God is here also the attribute according to which he gives to every one his own, to his people salvation, to his and their enemies destruction. The second clause is from Is. xl. 5, "and the glory of the Lord shall be revealed, and all flesh shall see it;" comp. lxvi. 18, xxxv. 2. *All nations behold the glory*,—the glory of the Lord in the revelations of his being, through the deeds of righteousness and grace.

Ver. 7–12.—Ver. 7. *All who worship images shall be ashamed, and boast themselves of nullities, worship him all ye gods.* Ver. 8. *Sion hears it and is glad, the daughters of Judah shout for joy, because of thy judgments, O Lord.* Ver. 9. *For thou, Lord, art the Most High over the whole earth, highly*

exalted over all gods. Ver. 10. *Ye who love the Lord hate what is evil, he preserveth the souls of his saints, he delivereth them from the hand of the wicked.* Ver. 11. *Light is sown for the righteous, and for the upright joy.* Ver. 12. *Rejoice, ye righteous in the Lord, and praise his holy memorial.*—On ver. 7, comp. Is. xlii. 17: "they turn back (in consequence of the glorious future revelation of the Lord), and are ashamed, that trust in the image, that say to the molten work, thou art our God," xliv. 9. השתחוו is, according to Ps. xcvi. 9, the imperat., not the preter. The exhortation, according to the Psalmist, here also, as there, is addressed to the heathen. The false gods are called upon to worship through the medium of their servants. The gods are also, in other passages, frequently viewed poetically, as gifted momentarily with life and feeling (comp. the immediately preceding אֱלִילִים, and the observations made at Ps. xcvi. 5), only for the purpose of exhibiting the Lord as triumphing over them; comp. Ex. xii. 12, Num. xxxiii. 4, "and upon their gods has the Lord executed judgment;" Is. xix. 1, "behold the Lord rideth upon a swift cloud, and cometh to Egypt, and the gods of the Egyptians are moved at his presence." The Septuagint could not understand this representation, and substituted angels instead of gods, to whom what was said could apply only by an inference, as a majori ad minus; if the proud gods of the heathen cannot measure themselves with the Lord, how much less may the angels, Heb. i. 6. As decisive against the *direct* reference to the angels, may be mentioned the whole connection and tendency of the Psalm, which is to enspirit the people of God in prospect of the approaching victory of the false gods, and also the usus loquendi, as Elohim never signifies angels.—In ver. 8, we have the contrary effect, which the appearance of the Lord to judgment produces on Sion. This verse depends upon ver. 11 of the 48th Psalm, which celebrates the great deliverance under Jehosaphat, which shall again live in the deliverance of the future; "Mount Sion rejoices, the daughters of Judah shout because of thy judgments," to which passage, also, Isaiah alludes in chap. xl. 9. *Hears it*, namely, that the Lord judges, as he did on a former occasion, under the king, whose name was so gloriously verified. The *daughters of Judah* are only in opposition to Sion, the *remaining* cities of Judah. On the words which

allude to the name of Jehosaphat, "because of thy judgments, O Lord," we are not to comp. Ps. xcvi. 13. The discourse there is of an entirely different judgment.—On the first half of ver. 9, comp. Ps. lxxxiii. 18, from which it is taken word for word: our passages serves to confirm the interpretation there given. On the second half, comp. Ps. xlvii. 9, "the princes of the nations are gathered together to the nation of the God of Abraham, for the shields of the earth are God's: he is highly exalted." The *conclusion* is borrowed from both Psalms. It is very remarkable that the Psalmist alludes, in a manner full of meaning, to the three Psalms which, according to our view, refer to the deliverance under *Jehosaphat*, and which have been separated from each other by modern criticism. Our view is thus strongly confirmed:—The "evil" in the exhortation, founded on the prophecy in ver. 10, is neither *idolatry*, nor, as Calvin supposes, specially revenge, but wickedness and unrighteousness; comp. Ps. xxxiv. 13, Rom. xii. 9, 2 Tim. ii. 19. The prosperity of wickedness easily seduces to wickedness, because it shakes our faith in God, and in his providence, and therefore throws down the only floodgate which can restrain the floods of wickedness. In opposition to this temptation, the Psalmist points the servants of the Lord to the salvation of the future. Before "he preserveth," there is, in reality, a "for" to be understood.—A sure standard by which to interpret ver. 11, is furnished by the parallel passage, Ps. cxii. 4, "light arises, זָרַח, for the upright in darkness." This shews that "to be sown," is "to be scattered abroad," the point of comparison being only the richness of the gift.[a]—The first half of ver. 12 is from Ps. xxxii. 11, which, in that passage, also forms the conclusion; and the second half from Ps. xxx. 4.

PSALM XCVIII.

In the first strophe, ver. 1–3, after a short exhortation to praise the Lord, the object of the praise is given,—the Lord has redeemed his people in a wonderful manner. The second strophe, ver. 4–6, shews how this praise is to be rendered: all means

a Ven.: "Now light is said to be scattered when the rising sun spreads his rays plentifully in every direction."

which, in every place, are within reach, ought to be employed for this purpose. The third stanza says by whom the praise should be given: by the whole earth.

The Psalm is the only one which is entitled מִזְמוֹר, a Psalm without any addition. This struck several of the old translators; the Septuagint, the Vulgate, and the Syriac added "by David," the Chaldee, "a *prophetical* Psalm." This common name of all the Psalms manifestly cannot be employed here in its general, it must be used in a peculiarly modified sense. Such a sense is to be obtained only in *one* way. Our Psalm stands to the preceding one in the same relation that Hab. chap. iii. does to chap. i. and ii., and as Is. xlii. 10–12 does to ver. 13–17, with this difference that the arrangement there is the *reverse* of that here: the Psalm before us is the lyric accompaniment to the more decidedly prophetical Psalm which precedes. As the Psalm in the Psalm, therefore, it bears the name of מִזְמוֹר, the originality of which is attested by the doubled זַמְּרוּ and the זִמְרָה in ver. 5 and 6: it is manifestly with reference to the title that such strong prominence is given to the זִמְרָה. In favour of this view we may urge first, the contents of the two Psalms, second, the analogy of the title of Ps. c., which is related to Ps. xcix., exactly as ours is to Ps. xcvii., and third, the formal arrangement which exhibits our Psalm as making up one whole with the preceding one. Both Psalms fall into strophes of three verses. Of these strophes there are in all seven, of which, according to the usual division of the seven, four belong to the prophetical, three to the pre-eminently lyrical part.

The doctrinal contents of the Psalm, according to what has been said, must be confined to those of the preceding Psalm: it sets forth like it the appearance of the Lord in his kingdom, in so far as it shall bring salvation directly to the house of Israel, and only towards the conclusion points, as an addition, to Ps. xcvi., to salvation for the *whole earth* as closely bound up with this.

Ver. 1–3. The object of the praise of the Lord.—Ver. 1. *Sing to the Lord a new song, for he does wonders, his right hand and his holy arm helped him.* Ver. 2. *The Lord makes known his salvation, before the eyes of the heathen he unveils his righteousness.* Ver. 3. *He has remembered his mercy and his faithfulness to the house of Israel, all the ends of the earth have seen the sal-*

vation of our God.—The point of view in the whole Psalm is an ideal one; the time of the already-appeared salvation, of the already-begun kingdom of the Lord. The *new* song ought to be sung for first time after those wonders which form the object of it have actually happened. The beginning, "Sing to the Lord a new song," is from Ps. xcvi. The exhortation here also is directed not to Israel, but to the *whole earth*, which is expressly named. This is manifest from the last strophe, which is devoted to the more immediate object of the Psalmist, while the "sing" here is only preliminary, as an introduction to the mention of the *object*. What the *wonders* are that are treated of is evident partly from the reference to the fundamental passages of Isaiah already quoted, partly from the prophetic part, and partly from ver. 3. The circumstance that the object there is so exactly defined once more, shows that we have before us not an arbitrarily rent whole—in this case the exact defining of the object would have been left entirely to Ps. xcvii.—but a pair of Psalms, the second member of which is intended to have as sure and independent a standing of its own as the first. "His right hand helped him," is from Isaiah lix. 16: "And he saw that there was no man, and wondered that there was no intercessor, then *his own right hand helped him*, and his righteousness upheld him," and lxiii. 5: "And I looked and there was none to help, and I wondered that there was no assistance, then *mine own arm* helped me, and my wrath upheld me." This verbal reference, at the very beginning, shows that we have before us, as in Ps. xcvii., the lyrical echo of the prophetic announcements of the second part of Isaiah. Here, as in the fundamental passage, the arm of the Lord, with which he helps himself in bringing salvation to Sion, stands opposed to the use of the ordinary means of help in the church of God.[a] The expression is very consolatory, because it shows us that we need not despair, even though these means of help be sealed up, even though everywhere there meet us nothing but weakness and feebleness, though a glance at the cut-down trunk of Jesse is enough to make us quite spiritless. Comp. Jud. vii. 2, where the Lord says to Gideon: The people that are with thee are too

a Calvin: "In both passages, the arm of God is opposed to ordinary means, which, although they do not derogate from the power of God, in some measure, like a veil, hide his face."

many for me to give the Midianites into their hands, lest Israel vaunt themselves against me, and say, Mine own hand hath saved me." "His holy arm" is from Is. lii. 10: "And the Lord has made bare his holy arm" (in the deliverance of Sion) comp. xl. 10, li. 9. The "*holy*" is awful, infinitely removed above every creature, comp. at Ps. xxii. 3.—Ver. 2 and 3 depend upon Isaiah lii. 10: "The Lord has made bare his holy arm before the eyes of all nations, and all the ends of the earth see the salvation of our God." The references to this passage run through the three verses which mark out the *object* of the song of praise, and the whole strophe must manifestly be regarded as an expansion of that fundamental prophetical passage. *His righteousness:* comp. Ps. xcvii. 6. For the people of the Lord, salvation is the expression of his *righteousness*, which gives to every one his own: he has promised them salvation; comp. "his faithfulness," in ver. 3 and Rom. xv. 8, 9.—The first half of ver. 3 alludes to Is. lxiii. 7. *Mercy and faithfulness:* comp. Ps. xcii. 3. The *salvation* which all the ends of the earth see is, in the first instance, the salvation of *Sion*. For the discourse is of this in Ps. xcvii. and also in the fundamental passage. The heathen, however, shall be admitted into participation of this salvation.

Ver. 4–6. As in the preceding strophe we had *why*, so here we have *how* we should praise the Lord.—Ver. 4. *Shout unto the Lord, all the earth, break out and rejoice and sing.* Ver. 5. *Sing to the Lord with the guitar, with the guitar and the voice of song.* Ver. 6. *With trumpets and the voice of the clarionet, rejoice before the Lord the King.*—The first half of ver. 4 is literally from ver. 1 of Ps. lxvi., a Psalm which belongs to the time of Hezekiah, only that לאלהים is there; comp. also Ps. xlvii. 1, "rejoice with hands, all nations shout unto God with jubilee-voice," and the observations made at that verse on the exhortations addressed to the whole world to rejoice over the salvation of Israel. "To break out in joy," פצח רנה, is peculiar to Isaiah, comp. xiv. 7, xliv. 23: "break out, ye mountains, in joy" (the *material* fundamental passage), xlix. 13, liv. 1; still more so, however, is the "break out and rejoice," comp. lii. 9: "break out and rejoice together, ye ruins of Jerusalem," —the *formal* fundamental passage. On זמרו comp. Ps. xlvii. 6. —The קול זמרה is from Is. li. 3.—On "before the Lord the

King, comp. Is. vi. 5. It looks back to the expression, "the Lord reigneth," מָלָךְ, in Ps. xcvii. 1, and is equivalent to "before the Lord who has now set up his kingdom, and brought the whole earth under his subjection."

In the last strophe, ver. 7–9, who should rejoice: in the preceding one the intensity, here the extent of the joy.—Ver. 7. *Let the sea roar and its fulness, the world, and them who dwell upon it.* Ver. 8. *Let the streams clap their hands, and the mountains rejoice together,* Ver. 9. *Before the Lord, because he comes to judge the earth, he will judge the earth in righteousness, and the nations in uprightness.*—The first clause of ver. 7 is from Ps. xcvi. 11. The *roaring* suits the fulness of the sea as well as the sea itself: it is used, Job xxxix. 25, of the loud shout of the human voice. In so far as it is applied to the sea it denotes its solemn roar. The second clause is literally from Ps. xxiv. 1.—The clapping of the hands is an expression of joy, comp. for example Ps. xlvii. 1, and was employed as such especially at the commencement of the reign of earthly kings, comp. 2 Kings xi. 12: "and they clapped the hands, and said long live the king." The fundamental passage is Is. lv. 12,—the only one, moreover, where, by a bold poetical figure, the clapping of hands is ascribed to inanimate objects: "the mountains and the hills shall break forth before you into singing, and all the trees of the field shall clap their hands." Instead of the *streams* here, the *trees* are there; the *mountains* which follow here are named there immediately before.—The reason why the whole earth should rejoice is given in ver. 9: he comes to judge the whole earth, and to bring it by his righteous government from a state of sorrow into a state of salvation and joy. Comp. at Ps. xcvi. 13.

PSALM XCIX.

The Psalm begins in ver. 1 with the joyful cry, "the Lord reigneth," depicts in ver. 2–5 how the appearing in his kingdom delivers his people from the state of oppression in which they had hitherto been, and exhorts them to praise devoutly the Lord from whom such glorious things are to be expected. He points

in ver. 6–9 to the means which secure a participation in the blessings of the future, the dangers which threaten this participation: heartfelt trust in the Lord, and obedience to his commandments, are as the history of antiquity, the example of Moses, Aaron, and Samuel, shews the way to salvation, from which sin excludes, while it brings into the domain of an avenging God;—and concludes with a renewed exhortation devoutly to praise the Lord, who appears great and awful no less in effecting the salvation itself, than in appointing the conditions connected with its enjoyment.

If we separate ver. 1 as containing the theme, the Psalm consists of two strophes, each of four verses, which are manifestly distinguished from each other by "exalt the Lord our God," &c., in ver. 5 and ver. 9. That these strophes again fall into half strophes, each containing a pair of verses, is evident from the circumstance that the "he is holy," which occurs three times after the example of the original passage in Is. vi., besides being at the end of the two strophes, stands also in the middle of the first, and divides its two halves from each other. The full insight into the formal arrangement of the Psalm is got when the following Psalm, which forms with it one pair, is added to it. We then obtain, whether the two ruling verses are added or not, 14 verses or 12; three strophes of four verses, or seven half-strophes of two.

The Psalm is the inverse of "repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand," Is. xl. 3–5, "the kingdom of heaven is at hand, therefore repent," an old testament, "with zeal ye sons of men." Among the series of Psalms, Ps. xci.–c., it is most closely connected with Ps. xcv. In common with that Psalm, it sets especially before the eye of the church high demands proceeding from the approaching appearance of the Lord in his kingdom, and also after the model of Ps. lxxviii. teaches by *history*, and finally ends with a solemn warning to those who do not prepare their hearts and take heed to their ways.

According to ver. 1 and 5 our Psalm was composed at a time when the ark of the covenant was still in existence, and therefore before the Chaldean invasion. This undoubted fact is of importance in determining the age of the whole series, and of course also of the second part of Isaiah.

Ver. 1. *The Lord reigneth, the nations tremble, he who sitteth upon the cherubim, the earth shakes.*—On "the Lord reigneth," comp. Ps. xciii. 1, xcvi. 10, xcvii. 1. The futures are not optatives, but are to be taken prophetically as at Ps. xciii. 1, xcvi. 10. Otherwise, instead of תִּגְעַשׁ, we would have had the abbreviated future. The character of the whole Psalm is prophetic. The trembling of the people and the moving of the earth are expressions of fear and reverence[a] before the Lord appearing in his kingdom; comp. "tremble before him all ye lands" in Ps. xcvi. 9. By alluding to the future trembling of the people the Psalmist designs to furnish a means of strength to the church trembling at the present and the immediately future periods; the nations who now proudly rise up against the Lord and his kingdom, and before whom the heart of the people is moved like the moving of the trees before the wind.[b] The church of the Lord may have trouble and sorrow for a time, but the promise of Deut. ii. 25, will always in the end be fulfilled: "I will this day begin to give thy terror and thy fear over the nations which are under the whole heaven who hear of thy report and tremble and quake before thee." When her king appears it is the *world's* turn to tremble. Perhaps allusion is made to the other sense of רגז "to be angry," Ps. iv. 4. The עמים stands poetically without an article. That the nations generally are meant is evident from the parallel, "the earth," and the last verse of Ps. xcviii., and also. Ps. xcvi. 7–10. Before the second clause, we must supply "the Lord reigneth;" and "who sitteth upon the cherubims" equivalent to the God of the whole earth," Ps. xcvii. 5, (comp. at Ps. lxxx. 1) belongs in reality to both clauses. The two clauses, therefore, are equivalent to "the Lord who sits upon the cherubim reigneth, therefore the nations tremble, the earth moves." The translation, "he sits upon the cherubim," essentially disfigures the sense, and could have been

[a] Amyr.: "That fear which proceeds from simple reverence as well as that which arises from apprehension of evil, produces bodily shaking. Thus this exhortation (?) may concern believing as well as unbelieving nations."

[b] Calvin: For, inasmuch as the Jews were beset by enemies on all sides, it was of great consequence that the power of God should be extolled among them, that they might know that they would be always safe under his protection against the hatred and fury of them all . . . . . that God will make known such power in the deliverance of his elect people as will throw into confusion all nations, and that they will feel it, however much they may rage to their own ruin."

favoured only by those who took a false view of "the Lord reigneth," and referred it to his constant dominion instead of to his appearing in his kingdom. It is not the omnipotence of God in general, but the fact that this omnipotent God *reigneth*, that is the cause of the trembling of the people. The expression "sitting upon the cherubim" is a phrase of constant occurrence as an epithet applied to Jehovah, comp. 1 Sam. iv. 4, 2 Sam. vi. 2, 2 Kings xix. 15, and other passages. This use of the expression "sitting upon the cherubim" indicates that the symbol of the presence of the Lord among his people was still in existence. It occurs nowhere else except in reference to the *ark of the covenant*.

Ver. 2–5.—Ver. 2. *The Lord is in Sion great, and he is exalted above all nations.* Ver. 3. *They shall praise thy name great and terrible: holy is he.* Ver. 4. *And the strength of the king who loveth right: thou hast founded rectitude, right, and righteousness in Jacob hast thou executed.* Ver. 5. *Exalt the Lord our God, and pray at his footstool: holy is he.*—On ver. 2 comp. Ps. xlviii. 1. The discourse is not of the greatness of the Lord in general, but of that greatness which he acquires by the glorious revelation of the future.[a] The subject in "they shall praise" in ver. 3 is the *nations*—(not "*may* they praise"—this is opposed by the prophetic character of the Psalm, which stands in contrast to the lyric nature of Ps. c.) The nations had been last spoken of, and if the subject had been changed there would have been some intimation of it given. In the lyric part, the exhortation "to praise the Lord, &c.," which depends upon the *previous announcement* made in the passage before us, is directed to the whole earth; and even in other passages the deeds of the Lord on behalf of Israel very frequently appear as the object of praise for all nations, as in Ps. xcviii. 3, 4; comp. also Ps. lxxxvi. 9, "all nations shall come and worship before thee, O Lord, and give glory to thy name." The expression, "shall praise thy name," is equivalent to "shall praise thee glorious by thy deeds." The "great and terrible" is from Deut. x. 17, "for the Lord thy God is the God of gods, the Lord of lords, the *great* God and *terrible*," comp. xxviii. 58, "that thou fear this name

[a] Ven.: "He shews that he is the exalted and most powerful King, and avenger of his people in Jerusalem, and superior to and set over all the nations of the earth."

the glorious and the *terrible*." The "holy is he" forms the basis of the pre-announcement contained in the preceding clause. The holiness of the Lord, comp. Ps. xxii. 3, guarantees the praise of all nations, for the glorious deeds by which this shall be called forth. That the "He" does not refer to the name but to the Lord himself is clear from ver. 5 and 9, and from the reference to the "holy, holy, holy, is the Lord of hosts" of the fundamental passage. It is for the sake of conformity to ver. 5 and 9, and the reference to the fundamental passage, that the address here is given up. But for this, the expression would have been: for *thou art holy*.— In ver. 4, "they shall praise thy holy name," is more exactly developed. The name appears as the product of the deeds of omnipotent righteousness or of the righteous omnipotence of God on behalf of his people. This verse as regards construction is designedly made entirely dependant upon the preceding one: "and (they shall praise) the strength of the King who loves right," in order that it may not be supposed that the occurrence of the "holy is He" gives rise to a new strophe. Ewald, nevertheless, has leapt over this hedge. The עֹז means nothing else than strength, not splendour or fame, &c. (comp. at Ps. xxix. 1), and occurs even in this sense in other passages of this series of Psalms, Ps. xciii. 1, xci. 6, 7. On "who loveth right," comp. Ps. xxxiii. 5, xxxvii. 28, "for the Lord loveth right and forsaketh not his saints, they shall be preserved for ever, and the seed of the wicked shall be rooted out." The remaining part of the verse is, in reality, connected with what precedes by a "for," or by a semicolon: he represents the facts by which the Lord has shewn himself as the omnipotent righteousness, or in reality shall shew himself; the import being, for thou hast delivered thy congregation by a righteous judgment from the unrighteous oppression of the world, and hast risen up with mighty arm for the glorious deliverance of the children of God. *To found* or *to establish* righteousness (comp. Ps. lxviii. 10), is to bring his righteous way to a firm standing: this happens when God judges righteously, comp. at Ps. lxxv. 2, lviii. 1, xcvi. 10. The last words allude to 2 Sam. viii. 15: "and David was king over all Israel, and executed right and righteousness to his whole people." What was there said of Israel's visible king shall be performed in future times in all its truth by his invisible true King,—comp.

"and the strength of the *King*."—On "exalt," in ver. 5, comp. Ps. xxx. 1, xxxiv. 3. The exhortation to *worship* occurs also in Ps. xcv. 6, xcvi. 9, xcvii. 7. The *footstool* of the Lord is every where the *ark of the covenant*, which he who sitteth upon the cherubim touched as it were with his feet, comp. 1 Chron. xxviii. 2, "to build an house where the ark of the Lord rested, and the footstool of our God," Ps. cxxxii. 7, Lam. ii. 1, "the place of my foot," Is. lx. 13. Even Is. lxvi. 1 forms an exception only in appearance, because it is only in opposition to the usual way of speaking, and in marked reference to it, that the *earth* is there called the footstool of the Lord: *heaven*, not, as you suppose, the place above the cherubim, is my *throne*, the *earth*, not the *ark of the covenant*, according to common language, is my *footstool*. In the passage before us we cannot leave the common sense, on account of the "sitting upon the cherubim," in ver. 1,—comp. also his holy mountain in ver. 9. The השתחוה is an expression of constant occurrence, with the ל of the object to whom worship is due; and it occurs in this way in Ps. xcvi. 9, xcvii. 7; we must translate here also "his footstool" (acc), "his holy mountain," in ver. 9, and must reject the translation "at it" as arbitrary. Worship is due to the ark of the covenant in so far as the Lord sits enthroned upon it, and makes himself known there. Is. xlv. 14 is similar where Sion is worshipped, and supplication is made to her, on account of the God who is present in her.

Ver. 6–9.—Ver. 6. *Moses and Aaron among his priests, and Samuel among those who call upon his name: they call upon the Lord, and he hears them.* Ver. 7. *In the cloudy-pillar he speaks to them, they kept his testimonies, and he gave them the law.*—Ver. 8. *O Lord our God, thou didst hear them, thou wast a forgiving God to them, and an avenging God because of their iniquity.* Ver. 9. *Exalt the Lord our God, and worship his holy mountain: for holy is the Lord our God.*—In ver. 8. it is shewn by the great representatives of the people in the past, that the first condition of participating in the glorious salvation of the future is *calling upon God* from living faith in him, and heartfelt trust in his compassion. That the particip. and the future here and in the first half of ver. 7 are to be explained by a lively realization of the past (contrary to Hitzig), and that the

sense is only poetically transferred from the past to the present, which ought to be instructed by it, is evident from the second half of ver. 7 and 8. The observations made at Ps. liv. 4 are applicable to the ב. Not only Moses, but also Samuel, is numbered among the *priests*, next after Aaron. That we have here merely a merismos, that is Moses, Aaron and Samuel, were among the priests, and those who called upon his name, is evident from the קראים repeated from the preceding word, *they called*, which refers to Moses and Aaron as well as to Samuel, although the calling is ascribed literally only to Samuel. Aaron only was a priest in the usual sense. At the foundation, however, of this there is another spiritual idiom, that, namely, according to which all are called priests who possess what constitutes the essence of the ordinary priestly office (although not the externals), inward connection with God, free access to the throne of grace, and the gift and power of intercessory prayer. This figurative idiom occurs even in the law itself, comp. Ex. xix. 6, where it is said to all Israel: "Ye shall be to me a kingdom of *priests*, a holy people." The law hence acknowledges an ideal priesthood along with the ordinary one. That in certain circumstances those who possessed this ideal priesthood were warranted in exercising all the functions of the ordinary priesthood, is evident from the example of Samuel, and in a certain measure also from the example of Moses, who acted as a priest during the seven days of the consecration of the common priests, Lev. viii. 1 ss. Here, however, it is only the *calling upon God* that is considered as the essential part of the priestly office. This is evident from the circumstance that in the last clause the "they call," comprehends both "the being a priest" and the calling; hence the expression "among those who call upon his name," can be nothing more than an *explanation* of among his priests. Ex. xvii., for example, shews that Moses exercised this priestly function, when by his intercession for the people he decided the contest against Amalek, Ex. xxxii. 31, 32, Ps. cvi. 23. Samuel fulfilled this calling especially when the Israelites were oppressed by the Philistines, comp. 1 Sam. vii. 9, "and Samuel cried unto the Lord, and the Lord heard him." The idea that the last words allude directly to this passage is all the more probable, as we have already found an allusion in ver. 4, which it is impos-

sible to mistake, to the books of Samuel. The lesson, therefore, here imparted to Israel is: if you wish to participate in the salvation of the future, call upon the Lord, after the example of Moses, Aaron, and Samuel, for *hearing* invariably follows *calling;* in "Lord come" there always lies a slumbering, "Here, Son."—From the pillar of cloud God spoke not only to Moses, Ex. xxxiii. 9, "and when Moses came into the tent, the pillar of cloud descended and stood at the door of the tent, and the Lord talked with Moses," and again, shortly before his death, Deut. xxxi. 15, but also to Aaron, Num. xii. 5. On the occasion there related it was indeed in anger but in anger beyond which grace was concealed. Samuel received divine revelations in another form; but as the matter was common to him with Moses and Aaron, the form which was peculiar to these is transferred to him; or the speaking of God in the pillar of cloud may be considered as a figurative expression of divine revelation generally, taken from one of its original forms. "He gave the law to them," is a repetition of "he spoke to them out of the pillar of cloud," just as "they call upon him," in ver. 7, is a repetition of "among his priests and them that call upon his name," serving the purpose of placing faithfulness towards revelations already obtained in intimate connection with the obtaining of new revelations, and of representing the former as the indispensable condition of the latter; as if it had been "he revealed himself to them because they had acted faithfully towards what they already received." From the expression, "he gave the law to them," it follows that the clause, "he spoke to them in the pillar of cloud," is intended to refer to the communication of laws, precepts, injunctions, comp. Ex. xxv. 22, "and I come to meet with thee there, and to speak with thee.....all that I shall give thee in commandment to the children of Israel." In reference to his testimonies, comp. at Ps. xciii. 5. "He gave the law to them," is from Ex. xv. 25, where Moses, as a reward for his faithfulness to the Lord, and especially for having maintained his faith in temptation, receives from him the injunction to make the bitter water sweet. This fundamental passage shews that the usual translation, "and the law which he gave them," is false. This translation, besides, destroys the train of thought in the verse, as it has above been developed, and robs the words of their import. The passage

already quoted, for example, shews how Moses obtained the law as a reward for his faithful following of the commandments of the Lord, and Num. xii. 5, how Aaron did so: had not his observance of the testimonies of the Lord distinguished him from the company of Korah, Dathan, and Abiram, he as well as they would have been destroyed. Samuel obtained, for example, divine instructions as to how he ought to conduct himself in connection with the impetuous desire of the people for a king, 1 Sam. viii. 6 ss., and also towards Saul, 1 Sam. xv. The whole verse proceeds upon the view that the communication of new precepts and rules of life shall be bound up with the future glorious revelation of the Lord. The people are here told how they may obtain participation in this. Participation in the *new* covenant is the reward of faithfulness to the *old*. If we observe the commandments of God we shall *receive* the commandments of God, and with them salvation.—The two first clauses of ver. 8 merely resume what had been said, for the purpose of connecting with it the last clause, which contains the peculiar point: thou didst hear them *assuredly*, thou wast to them a forgiving God, but at the same time—woe to us if we bring thy wrath upon us—an avenger of their iniquity. That the thought of our verse lay very near the Psalmist's heart is clear not only from the circumstance that the Psalm ends with it, but also from this, that the address is impassionately directed to Jehovah. The second part of Isaiah contains all the particulars into which the thought of our verse is drawn out; the maxim, "there is no peace, saith the Lord, to the wicked," which separates the three books of the second part from each other, is fully developed. The "our God" is emphatic, and intimates that the history is at the same time a prophecy. The suffix in עניתם, which is a repetition of ויענם in ver. 6, refers to those previously named. On the other hand, the suffixes in להם and in עלילותם refer to the *people*. For the personal history of the three individuals named affords no remarkable examples of the forgiving mercy of God, and the Psalmist, in the passage before us, can only refer to clear and well-marked cases;[a] the *forgiveness* appears here as the conse-

a Ven.: "God may be here said to have forgiven these men their sins, but what emphasis would this have? and for what end would it be said? For the expression takes for granted, that these men provoked God in some singular way, so that God, in

quence of the *hearing*, this again as the result of the *calling* mentioned in the preceding clauses; but this calling refers not to the personal circumstances of the individuals named, but it is their intercession on behalf of the *people*, which had for its object to remove the divine wrath lying upon them; the wrath leads to serious offences, not to sins of infirmity; only the former can be understood by עלילות,—the word, which is used of the actions of men only in a bad sense, denotes always only *sins* properly so called, never mere inadvertencies (comp. at Ps. xiv. 1); in Ps. liii. it is explained by עול, and here this sense is demanded, by the manifest opposition to the "forgiving:" a *forgiving* God wast thou to them (for their infirmities), and an *avenging* one for their iniquities. It is evident, therefore, that the עלילותם does not suit the three individuals who are named. The sins of Moses and Aaron were altogether sins of infirmity, the result of the sins of the people, and their punishment was intended to strike at them, comp. Deut. i. 37, iii. 26, iv. 21, Beitr.: the history makes no mention, even of sins of infirmity, in the case of Samuel. The transition to the people is all the more easy, as the persons named had a representative character, for they did not pray for themselves but for the people, obtained hearing and forgiveness on their behalf, and as they are here set up as an example for the people. The whole verse is a paraphrase of Ex. xxxiv. 7, from which the נשא in particular is taken. "Visiting the iniquities of the fathers upon the children, and upon the children's children," corresponds to the last clause. על is to be supplied to the נקם. In this case even the אל is better explained, with which the word נקם is not any where else joined. Allusion is made especially to the punishment of the whole congregation, Num. xiv. 20–23, as the greatest example of the wrath of God against evil-doers, comp. Ps. xcv. 11. The exhortation, "exalt the Lord our God," &c., has its basis not less in the reference to the inexorable judgment of God, than in that to his forgiving grace. In *both* Israel's God appears as the awful and the holy God, infinitely exalted both above the *love* and above the *wrath* of human passion.

the act of forgiving them, ought to be celebrated,—this, however, is foreign from their case."

PSALM C.

The exhortation to the whole earth to shout with joy, ver. 1, is developed at length in a strophe of four verses, which falls into two halves, of which each contains, first, the *exhortation*, and second, the *basis:* serve the Lord, for he has shewn himself as the only God, by what he has done for his people; ver. 2, 3, praise the Lord, for he is good, as the salvation shews which he has bestowed upon his people.

Our Psalm is related to Ps. xcix. exactly as Ps. xcviii. is to Ps. xcvii. It is the lyrical portion of the divided whole, the Psalm in the Psalm. This is pointed out by the title, "a Psalm for the praise *of the Lord*," *on account of the glorious manifestations of his nature announced in Ps. xcix.*, whose originality is guaranteed by the בתודה and the הודו in ver. 4. That the Psalm depends upon the preceding one is clear, not only from the formal arrangement, but also from the entirely general character of what is here laid down as a basis for the exhortation "to serve the Lord," &c., by which many expositors, who did not observe the connection of both Psalms, have been led to an entirely false view of the Psalm, and a misapprehension of its Messianic character, which becomes clearly established as soon as it is observed that the address in the whole Psalm is directed to the *heathen*, and that they are exhorted, not only to shout with joy to the Lord, but also to be subject to him. The Psalm forms not merely a conclusion to Ps. xcix.: it is assuredly with design that it is put at the end of the whole series, the ecumenic character of which becomes very obvious in it at the close.[a]

Ver. 1. *Shout for joy to the Lord all the world.*—Comp. Ps. xcviii. 4. The כל הארץ stands there, and in the fundamental passage, Ps. lxvi. 1, undoubtedly, of the whole earth. By the

[a] The connection with Psalm xcix. was, upon the whole, correctly seen by Brentz: "The hundredth Psalm very seasonably follows the ninety-ninth. For, in the one, there is contained a commendation of our Lord Jesus Christ, and the majesty of his kingdom; and, in the other, an exhortation, short, indeed, but joyful, to praise and celebrate the name of Christ in the whole earth, and among all nations. For he who conquers all by his majesty, and offers his beneficence to be enjoyed by all, deserves to be worshipped and celebrated by all."

" shout " is understood specially the *shout of a king*, comp. at Ps. ii. 11; the " serve," therefore, of the following verse, is comprehended under the " shout." The exhortation presupposes the arrival of those mighty events in which occasion is given to the nations of the earth to shout for joy to the Lord, and to salute him joyfully as their king.

Ver. 2–5.—Ver. 2. *Serve the Lord in joy, come before him in a shout.* Ver. 3. *Know that the Lord is God, he has made us and not we ourselves, his people and the sheep of his pasture.* Ver. 4. *Come to his gates with praise, to his courts with laudation, praise him, laud his name.* Ver. 5. *For good is the Lord, eternal his mercy, and his faithfulness from generation to generation.*—The first half of ver. 2, is from Ps. ii. 11, only that, instead of " in fear," there, where the Psalmist has to do with fierce rebels, there is substituted here " joy." This reference to the second Psalm shews, that the address here, as in ver. 1, is directed to the *heathen*, and further, that by *serving* him here we are not to understand merely the *worship of God:* the *serving* there is the opposite of *rebellion;* comp. also the clause in Ps. lxxii. 11, all the heathen shall serve him, that is, the Messiah, by whose appearance the cry, " the Lord reigneth," is realized.[a] The first clause of ver. 3 takes up the exhortation again, for the purpose of adding to it its *basis*. It is from Ps. xlvi. 11, which passage, again, depends upon the fundamental one, Deut. vii. 9. Know that I am God, exclaims God in Ps. xlvi. to the proud heathen, on the ground of the annihilation of Senacherib's army before the gates of Jerusalem. At the present day, when the Lord has done much that is glorious on behalf of his church, when he has placed it, by the deeds of his omnipotence and grace, in the centre of the world, the exhortation of the Psalmist, whose faith anticipates these deeds, is repeated with much greater right. From such references as these, we see how the sacred writers were moved with zeal to prepare for themselves ladders out of the glorious deeds of God in times past, on which they ascended to joyful hope in regard to the future. Did we, before whom there lies open a far greater, a richer variety of such deeds, follow them in this, we would not feel so often dispirited. Before

a Ven.: " To serve the Lord in joy implies, that submission is rendered to him as *King* and *Lord* willingly and joyfully in all things."

the "he has made us," there must in reality be supplied a "for," comp. ver. 5. Ps. xcix. contains the filling up instead of the general expression:—we are indebted to him for the entire glory, which loudly testifies of his own exclusive godhead. The "not we" is added, because any share, on the part of the church, in effecting the salvation bestowed upon her, would weaken the testimony which this bears to the exclusive Godhead of the Lord; comp. Ps. xcviii. 1, "his right hand and his holy arm helped him," and the fundamental passages referred to there. The last words are not to be explained: for his people, &c.,—in this case the "and not we" would not be suitable, and the fundamental passage also is against this, Ps. xcv. 6, which shews that the עשׂה stands in an independent position,—but "his people and his pasture-sheep" (comp. Ps. xcv. 7), as in opposition to the suffix in עשׂנו, which give the *ground* of the making, we who are or because we are. It was only from not observing this construction, and the meaning which it originates, that the sense of the Ketib has been pronounced wholly unsuitable (D. Wette), and the bad Keri reading לו for לא substituted,—a reading which the Chald. and Jerome had, while the other old translators, with the Septuagint at their head, express the reading which stands in the text. If we take a closer view, it becomes manifest, that "we are his" is wholly unsuitable. For it is not from what Israel is in general, but from what the Lord has already done for Israel, that the heathen are expected to know that Jehovah is God. Ez. xxix. 3, is exactly parallel to the text-reading, where Pharaoh says: my river is my own, and I have made myself.[a]—On "to his courts," in ver. 4, comp. Ps. xcii. 14, xcvi. 8; on "bless his name," Ps. xcvi. 2; and, on the whole contents of the verse, Is. lvi. 7, "my house shall be called an house of prayer for all nations," and chap. lx., where the pilgrimages of all the nations of the earth to the sanctuary of the Lord are described. A comparison of this fundamental passage shows that, behind the exhortation, there lies concealed a joyful *hope*, and that the exhortation is nothing but the lyric expression of the hope. The thought of the future participa-

a Hävernick gives us a translation: "I have made it for myself." The suffix, however, is wanting; and as Pharoah is not referred to as an individual, himself and his river, that is his kingdom, are in reality identical.

tion of all the nations of the earth in the kingdom of God appears here as it does in the prophets in an Old Testament form and dress: the nations of the earth praise the Lord in loud harmonious chorus in the same sanctuary in which now only the weak song of praise of a single little nation is heard. But that this dress even under the Old Testament itself was known as such, is evident from passages such as those of Is. lxvi. 23, "and it happens from month to month and from Sabbath to Sabbath all flesh shall come to worship before me"—all the inhabitants of the earth every Sabbath,—which, if literally interpreted, contains an absurdity.—At "for good is the Lord," in ver. 5, we are to suppose added, "as is shown by the great salvation which he has imparted to his people, and in them at the same time to the whole world." The Lord is good, not evil, comp. Ps. xxv. 8, "good and *upright* is the Lord," xxxiv. 9, lxxxvi. 5. The word never means *kind;* and this sense is expressly excluded here by the circumstance that it is not only the mercy of the Lord, but also his *faithfulness* towards those who have received his promises, that appears here as the expression of his goodness. For the two last propositions are merely the development of the first. On "his mercy endureth for ever," comp. Is. liv. 8, 10.

There can be no doubt that Ps. xci–c. belong to the same time and same author, that they form a connected series, that they are on the territory of the Psalm poetry, what the second part of Isaiah is on the territory of prophecy, and that we have before us in them a decalogue of Psalms intimately connected together. The reference to the relation in which Israel stands to the might of the world, is common to all these Psalms.[a] The objective view of suffering also is a common feature: the Psalmist stands every where above it, no crying from the depths, no conflict with despair,—the explanation being that the Psalmist has to do with *future* suffering, and is preparing for it a shield of consolation. These Psalms also are in common characterised by a confident expectation of a glorious revelation of the Lord, which the author, following up the prophetical writings, sees with the eye of faith as already present. It is common to them all to quote with marked

a "Venema: "All these Psalms are occupied with the destruction of enemies that have been sufficiently long endured, and with the deliverance of the people of God.

intelligence from older passages, especially from the Davidic Psalms, and from the second part of Isaiah, in connection with an originality of thought and expression which it is impossible to mistake. It is a common feature also that these quotations are in all cases taken from writings of a date prior to the captivity, in accordance with a series of other marks of a pre-chaldaic era which are scattered everywhere throughout these Psalms. It is common to them all that the tone never rises above a certain height, and never sinks beneath it, just as in the second part of Isaiah, in common with which our Psalm bears the character of mild sublimity. There are common to them all a great many parallel passages (compare the exposition), the use of the anadiplosis, the predilection for the mention of musical instruments, proceeding from the *joyful* character of the Psalm.

It is impossible also not to notice design in the arrangement. Two introductory Psalms of a general character stand at the head: Psalm xci., an expression of joyful confidence in the help of God in all troubles and dangers; Ps. xcii., the greatness of God, which brings on the destruction of the wicked, and the salvation of the just; Ps. xciii. is then opened with the watch-word, "the Lord reigneth," which henceforward is uttered on all sides, and applied for comfort and exhortation. The whole ends in the exhortation addressed to the whole earth to serve the Lord and to praise him, and to give him glory for the abundant salvation which he imparts,—the full-toned chorus of all nations and tongues who know that the Lord is God.

We have already pointed to the intimate connection between this cycle of Psalms, and the second part of Isaiah. We have hence a very strong proof in behalf of the genuineness of this portion of Scripture.

PSALM CI.

The Psalmist expresses the determination to sing praise to the Lord, and to extol his mercy and righteousness, ver. 1. He utters next, in a strophe of seven verses, which is divided by the three and the four, his resolution as King of Israel, partly in his own conduct to be blameless, ver. 2–4, partly in his choice of his ser-

vants to be careful, and to take zealous care, by rigid observance of righteousness, to root out the wicked from the city of God, ver. 5–8.

According to the ordinary view taken of the Psalm, which represents it as a whole complete within itself, there meets us a twofold difficulty of a very important character. 1. The Psalmist announces in ver. 1 a song of praise to the Lord, extolling his mercy and the justice obtained through him. But of this there is not in ver. 2–8 one single trace. The Psalmist there does not say one single word of what the Lord has done for him, but only of what he himself is determined to do. That this difficulty has been felt by translators, is evident from the fact that a manifest perversion of the sense of ver. 1, which serves to remove this difficulty, has been so generally adopted. 2. The words, "when wilt thou come to me," interpolated as it were in the middle of a representation of pious resolutions, stand so abruptly, that those interpreters whose view does not extend beyond our Psalm, have felt themselves put to extreme difficulty without having been able to come to rest and to a satisfactory result. The distress of the Psalmist hinted at in such a passing manner in these words, requires in what follows a more full description,—the short and stolen prayer, a more full development; neither of which is to be found within the compass of our Psalm.

The explanation of the difficulty is this, that we have before us in Ps. ci.–ciii., a trilogy of Psalms; that the praise announced here in ver. 1 of the mercy which the Lord has shewn the Psalmist, and of the justice which he has done for him, follows in Ps. ciii., which begins with the words, "praise the Lord, O my soul, and all that is within me his holy name" (comp. especially ver. 6, 8, 11, 17); and that Ps. cii., "the prayer of the miserable when he is afflicted and pours out his complaint before the Lord," is the full expansion of the cry, "when wilt thou come to me."

The plan and connection of the three divided whole, in a few words, is this: if my children only remain in the ways of the Lord, Ps. ci. 2–8, they may confidently call upon him in all trouble, Ps. cii.; and the end of the song shall always be: praise the Lord, O my soul, Ps. ciii.

The passage which contains the whole substance of our Psalm, is expressly indicated in Ps. ciii. 17, 18, "the mercy of the Lord

endureth from eternity to eternity upon those who *fear* him, and his righteousness to child's child, *to those who keep his covenant, and remember his commandments to do them.*" The paragraph in Ps. xviii., ver. 20–27, corresponds to this, where David shews that his salvation is the fruit of his *righteousness*. David, who everywhere had a deep knowledge of the truth, that salvation rises only on the basis of righteousness, does not speak here in his own person, but extends his consciousness to that of his *seed*, as in Ps. xviii., (comp. vol. i., p. 311, ss.), Ps. xxi., and expresses in their name *pious resolutions*, before giving utterance to the prayer for salvation: it is only the man who can with inward truth utter after him the words of our Psalm, that is entitled to appropriate as his own "the prayer of the miserable, &c." and that shall have occasion given him to say, "praise the Lord, O my soul." Our Psalm is hence an indirect *exhortation* to the successors of David on the throne, and to the church of God represented by them, and whose weal and wo were dependant on them: behind "I will walk blamelessly in a perfect way," there is concealed a "walk blamelessly."

The discovery of this close, hidden connection among Ps. ci.–ciii., is at the same time a discovery of the nakedness of rationalistic criticism. The Davidic origin of the Psalms has been acknowledged by its most distinguished representatives, with the single exception of Hitzig, who, with his idea of Maccabean Psalms, has so exposed himself to attack, that nothing in the world can save him. D. Wette thus expresses himself: there is nothing whatever against the title which announces this Psalm to have been composed by David: the Psalm is rather by its massiveness altogether worthy of such an author." And Ewald: "It is easy to discover in the poet a powerful reigning prince, indeed David himself, for David's lofty thought is expressed throughout." On the other hand, the two following Psalms can not be allowed to belong to David; they contain manifest traces of the era of the captivity. If the connection be seen, one or other of the two assertions, both of which are maintained with equal confidence, must be false. The originality of the title, however, according to which Psalm ci., and therefore the whole series, is attributed to David, can all the less be called in question, as this Psalm cannot be considered as standing without a title.

In regard to the time of composition, the idea that David could have composed the Psalm only at the time of his ascending the throne or near the commencement of his reign depends upon the false reference to David himself of what belongs to his successors, and upon a misconception in regard to the hortatory import of the Psalm. A twofold consideration meets us here. 1. Jerusalem is simply designated in ver. 8 as *the city of the Lord*. This presupposes that at the time of the composition of the Psalm, the ark of the covenant was already in Jerusalem, and that Jerusalem had already become decidedly the religious metropolis of the nation. At all events, therefore, the Psalm must belong to a period later than that referred to at 2 Sam. vi. 2. The Psalm has for its basis the promise made to David by Nathan, 2 Sam. vii. It was by this promise that David first got the assurance, that unlike Samuel he would continue to reign in the person of his descendants, and the earnest impulse to interest himself in their future welfare.

There are several undoubted allusions to our Psalm in the book of Proverbs (comp. the exposition), a circumstance which admits of explanation by the fact that it must have made a great impression on the mind of Solomon, for whom in the first instance it was intended, and that in regard to its sententious character it is nearly allied to the Proverbs.

Ver. 1. *By David, a Psalm. Mercy and judgment will I sing, to thee, O Lord, will I sing praise.*—Many expositors give: I will, as well-pleasing to thee, O Lord, sing of the mercy and righteousness, which I will manifest in my government. But against this we have the parallel and derived passage, Ps. lxxxix. 1, which may be considered as the Old Testament commentary on our Psalm, "The mercies of the Lord will I sing for ever," where the mercies of the Lord are the manifestations of his love towards the family of David; and also the fact that wherever in David's Psalms the resolution, or the exhortation, to sing to the Lord, and to play to him, זמר ליהוה is expressed on the basis of Jud. v. 3, "I will sing to the Lord, I will sing praise to the God of Israel," it always refers to the thankful praise of the Lord for his deeds of goodness, comp. Ps. xiii. 6, xviii. 49, ix. 11, xxx. 4, 12, xxxiii. 2, lxviii. 4 (where, in a peculiar manner, the expression in Jud. v. 3 stands forward as the fundamental passage)

lxxi. 22, 23; still further, that in the following part of the Psalm there are no traces whatever of the *mercy* which the king intends to show, for that ver. 6 contains no such is clear as day, the choice of trustworthy persons as servants of the king appears there only as the expression of the conscientiousness which is to distinguish his reign; and, finally, the concluding clause of the preceding Psalm, "Good is the Lord, eternal is his *mercy*, and from generation to generation his *faithfulness*" (of which *judgment* is the product), which shows that, at least according to the view of the collector, the mercy and the judgment here proceed from the *Lord*. We can, therefore, only explain: I will praise the Lord for the mercy and the judgment which he has promised to me. If so, we cannot restrict our view to the Psalm before us, but must look forward to Ps. ciii. For every where, where a similar expression occurs, and, in particular, previous to this, in the fundamental passage, and, in like manner, in Ps. lxxxix., it stands either as the introduction or the conclusion to a lengthened song of praise for the Lord's deeds of goodness.

In ver. 2–4, how the king intends to conduct himself in private life, in order to become partaker of the mercy and judgment.—Ver. 2. *I will walk wisely in a blameless way.—When wilt thou come to me?—I will walk in the blamelessness of my heart in the midst of my house.* Ver. 3. *I will place no wicked action before my eyes, to do wickedness I hate, it shall not cleave to me.* Ver. 4. *A perverted heart shall depart from me, what is wicked I will not know.*—On הִשְׂכִּיל, *to act wisely, prudently*, in opposition to the stupid conduct of the heathen, comp. at Ps. xiv. 2. הִשְׂכִּיל never signifies, to think upon any thing. The means by which this wise conduct is reached and maintained are to be found in meditating upon the commandments of God, Ps. cxix. 99. David had himself *practised* what he enjoins his posterity, and recommends as the sure means of salvation. We read in 1 Sam. xviii. 14, 15, where the words, in all probability, are taken from the lips of David, "And David walked wisely in all his ways, and the Lord was with him. And Saul saw that he acted very wisely, and he was afraid of him." It is with design that, at the very beginning, the future stands with the ה of effort. It regulates the following futures, and shows that they too are to be taken in the sense of resolutions and purposes. The תמים

as a predicate of the way, occurs in Ps. xviii. 30, 32; there is, therefore, no reason for translating: in the way of a blameless man. The word is one for which David had a peculiar predilection (comp. Ps. xviii. 23, 25, xv. 2), a fact to be accounted for by the deep impression which the words addressed by God to Abraham seem to have made upon his heart: Walk before me, and be thou perfect (blameless). This expression he had here also before his eyes: in the first clause, he takes from it the *blamelessness*, in the second, "*I will walk*," and in the middle clause he refers to the promise of the *blessing*, which is there connected with blamelessness of conduct. The affecting and anxious question, "*When wilt thou come to me*," *to bless and to help me in my trouble?* which follows immediately after the first words of the description of the pious resolutions, in order to render prominent the object of these resolutions, and to exhibit them as introductory to Ps. cii. depends upon Ex. xx. 21, "In every place where I erect a memorial for my name, I shall come to thee, and bless thee," and is equivalent to: When wilt thou, faithful to thy promises, come to me, and bless me, thou who hast erected in Sion, "the city of the Lord," ver. 8, a memorial of thy name, and hast chosen it as the place of thy sanctuary. The reference is all the more suitable, as David speaks here in name of his *posterity*, and these represent the people to whom, in the fundamental passage, the promise had been given. The various faulty translations which have been given have arisen merely from failing to observe the reference to this fundamental passage, from which the indefinite coming is defined to be a coming fraught with *blessing* and *help*, and also from failing to observe the reference to Ps. cii., which makes itself known as the expansion of the cry, "When wilt thou come to me?" by the clauses at the very beginning, "Lord, hear my prayer, and let my cry come before thee," according to which the coming of the Lord here can only be such a coming as goes hand in hand with the coming of the cry of the miserable to him. A host of different interpretations, like Luther's entirely arbitrary one, "with those who belong to me," are set aside by the simple remark, that מָתַי is never any thing else than an interrogative "when;" it is so even in Prov. xxiii. 35; comp. Michaelis on the passage. The 8th verse renders it impossible to think of the coming of the *ark of the cove-*

nant. On the "in the blamelessness of my heart," comp. the three dependant passages, Ps. lxxviii. 72, 1 Kings iii. 14, where the Lord says to Solomon, "And thou, if thou shalt walk before me as David thy father walked," "in the blamelessness of his heart," Prov. xx. 7, "The righteous walks in his blamelessness, blessed are his sons after him." The expression, "within my house," *i. e.*, within my four walls, denotes here, as in ver. 7, the opposite of "the city of the Lord," in ver. 8;—here his private life, there his public conduct. The last clause rests upon the basis of the first.—On דבר בליעל, the wicked action, in ver. 3, comp. at Ps. xli. 8. The סטים is not an adjective, but a subst.,[a] comp. Prov. xxi. 3, "to execute righteousness and judgment is more pleasant to the Lord than sacrifices." The שטים occurs in Hos. v. 2, undoubtedly in the sense of departure[b] from God and from his commandments, comp. the שוט =שטה, Ps. xl. 4, and the latter word, Num. v. 12, 19. "It shall not cleave to me," is from Deut. xiii. 17, "And there shall cleave nought of the curse to thine hand, that the Lord turn from the fierceness of his anger, and show thee mercy." This fundamental passage has given occasion to the expression.—On the first clause of ver. 4, comp. Ps. xviii. 26. Prov. xi. 20 is made up of this clause, and of ver. 2: "An abomination to the Lord are those of a perverted heart, but such as are blameless in their way are his delight," comp. also xvii. 20, "He who is of a perverted heart finds no good." In the second clause, we cannot translate the *wicked man*, but only the *wicked thing* (Ps. xxxiv. 16, lii. 3), will I not know. For in the preceding context, the discourse had been only about *sin*, not about sinners; and in the other view, we pass over to the territory of the second strophe.

Ver. 5–8. How the king will act in his government: he will not endure slander and pride in his presence, will surround himself with upright servants, will banish deceit and lying from his presence (the care for good servants in the middle, the removal of the bad ones on both sides), he will practise discipline with strictness among the people of the Lord. Or: the picture of a pious house, ver. 5–7, zeal in extirpating wickedness, ver. 8.—Ver. 5.

a Mich.: The name after such an infinitive is usually taken not subjectively but objectively.

b Mich.: Superstitious victims fighting against the divine institution.

Him who slandereth his neighbour in secret I extirpate, him who has proud eyes, and is haughty, I endure not. Ver. 6. *Mine eyes look after the faithful in the land, so that they dwell by me, he who walks in a blameless way shall serve me.* Ver. 7. *The man shall not dwell within my house who practises deceit, he who speaks lies shall not continue beside me.* Ver. 8. *Every morning I will extirpate all the wicked of the land, so that I root out from the city of the Lord all evil-doers.*—On the first clause of ver. 5, comp. Ps. xv. 3. David had himself, in Saul's time, experienced the ruinous consequences of slander prevailing in the court. The reading in the text is מְלוֹשְׁנִי, the part. in Po. with the paragogic Jod (on which comp. Ewald, § 211); the reading in the margin מְלָשְׁנִי, the part. in Pi. instead of מְלַשְׁנִי, like תְּרַצְּחוּ, Ps. lxii. 3. This peculiar expression was, in all probability, formed by David himself as a denom. from לָשׁוֹן. The verb occurs elsewhere only in Prov. xxx. 10, in an exactly similar and apparently derived connection: "Thou shalt not slander a servant to his master, lest he curse thee, and thou be found guilty." David makes use of an equally peculiar expression, in reference to slander, in Ps. xv. 3. The very determined expression, "I will extirpate," suits very well in David's mouth. *High eyes* and a *proud heart* are also joined together in Prov. xxi. 4. The latter of these terms is expressive of *high-minded self-conceit*, and not of *desire* (Ew.), as is manifest from Prov. xxviii. 25, where to the *wide-hearted* we find opposed the man who trusts in the Lord, and *love of strife* appears as the outward expression of *wide-heartedness*; comp. ch. xv. 18, where instead of the *wide-hearted man* we have the man of *wrath*. Pride is here very appropriately connected with *slandering*, because the latter springs from the desire to depreciate others. On the לֹא אוּכַל, *I cannot, I am not grown for it, it is beyond my strength*, comp. Is. i. 13. Berleb: "This does not only apply to rulers; but the church and every individual who would have part in Christ must be thus minded, and say with David: if any thing had risen up in me against my neighbour, I will extirpate it, and I will not suffer in me any thing proud or high-minded."—*That they dwell by me*, ver. 6, as my servants and counsellors. The expression, "he who walks in a blameless way," alludes designedly to ver. 2. The house of

a king is then, for the first time, represented as good, when he not only walks blamelessly himself, but has good servants, who devote themselves to a similar line of conduct.—In like manner, "within my house," in ver. 7, alludes to ver. 2, and forms along with it the proper opposite to "the city of the Lord," in ver. 8: virtuous conduct within the house on the part of the king and his servants, and in outward matter the strict administration of justice. On "he shall not be established," comp. Prov. xii. 3, where *sliding* stands opposed to being established. Should liars succeed in stealing into the king's house, they shall not, at least, obtain there a lasting abode.—On לבקרים, every morning, in ver. 8, comp. Ps. lxxiii. 14. It points to the unwearied zeal of the king, renewed every morning in rooting out the wicked. The words have, in the first instance, the sense of an impressive exhortation to the strict practice of righteousness, a warning against that effeminate cruelty which, by sparing the wicked, destroys the good, and brings the whole commonwealth to ruin;[a] comp. the repetition of this warning in Jer. xxi. 12: "O house of David, thus saith the Lord, execute judgment in the morning." And as the house of David reached its apex in Christ, the words have also the force of a prophecy. The second clause points to the basis on which the zeal displayed in recompensing the wicked rests: a king who has been placed over the people of the Lord has been laid under obligations of a peculiarly binding nature. The *city of the Lord* is Sion or Jerusalem, comp. Ps. cii. 13, xlvi. 4, xlviii. 1, 8, lxxxvii. 3. This was from the time the *sanctuary* was settled there, in a spiritual sense the abode of the whole of Israel (comp. at Ps. xxviii. 4, lxxxiv. 3), who, in reality, assembled there at the great festivals. Berleb.: "Do thou this even now, and make this promise to God,—Every thing that is ungodly I will root out of my heart, as out of thy sanctuary, where I wish to worship thee alone."

a Calvin: By this expression the sloth of rulers is condemned, who, though they see the wicked rushing on boldly to sin, put off from day to day, either through fear or indulgence. Let kings and magistrates, therefore, remember, that they are armed with the sword, in order that they may execute the judgments of God vigorously, and in due season.....We hence learn how pleasing to God is moderate severity, and, on the other hand, how obnoxious to him is that cruel kindness which lets the wicked act without restraint, as there is no greater inducement to sin than impunity."

PSALM CII.

Help me, O Lord, in my deep misery, ver. 1–5, and in my state of complete abandonment, ver. 6–10.—Near to perishing, I flee to thee, O thou who sittest on thy eternal throne in thy omnipotence and in thy mercy and faithfulness towards thy people: thou shalt have mercy upon Sion, for this the supplication of thy people ascends to thee, ver. 11–14, and shalt thus spread abroad thy call over the whole earth, ver. 15–17.—The salvation which Sion receives in her misery shall yet be praised by the most remote posterity, when the nations shall be assembled there to serve the Lord, ver. 18–22. Being near to destruction I flee to the Eternal, to him who is the eternal God, the Saviour of his people, ver. 23–27. The servants of the Lord are always victorious in the end, ver. 28.

The whole is enclosed within an introductory verse, which announces the design, and a concluding one, which sums up the contents of the Psalm. These stand out of the arrangement. Of the three strophes, the first and last consist each of ten verses, and the middle strophe of seven. The ten is divided both times by a 5, and the seven by a 4 and a 3.

The title runs: a prayer of the afflicted when he is troubled, and pours out his complaint before the Lord. On the תפלה comp. at the title of Ps. xc. The remark there made, that תפלה is properly a *supplicatory prayer*, the entreaty of the miserable for help, is confirmed by the passage before us, which contains what is equivalent to a *definition* of תפלה; in ver. 1 it stands in parallel to *the cry*. On עטף comp. at Ps. lxi. 2. On "when he pours out," comp. Ps. lxii. 8, "trust in him at all times, ye people, pour out your heart before him" with its cares and sorrows. On שיח comp. at Ps. lv. 2, lxiv. 1. The *originality* of the title appears from the correspondence with the concluding verse, from the reference of the beginning of the Psalm to it, and also of the conclusion of the second strophe, ver. 17, from the Davidic character which it bears in common with all the rest of the Psalm (comp. the passages quoted from Davidic Psalms), and, finally, from its poetic character, by which it is manifested to be a constituent portion of the Psalm.

From this title it appears how inadmissible is the modern idea based upon a misunderstanding of the 13 and following verses (see the exposition), according to which it is held to be a prayer of the people for deliverance from the captivity. The title is exclusive of every special historical occasion: according to it the Psalm is set apart for the *existing condition* of the miserable. As to the relation in which it stands to Ps. ci. and ciii., comp. at Ps. ci. The result there obtained is confirmed by the fact that the Psalm throughout is nearly connected with the Davidic Psalms (comp. the exposition)—a fact all the more striking as the Psalm throughout bears an independent and original character, and contains nowhere any trace of quotations from post-Davidic Psalms or from the later Scriptures;—by the circumstance that the absence of all acknowledgment of sin as the cause of the suffering which is very prominently brought forward as such, in other similar Psalms, admits of explanation by the connection with Ps. ci., but especially by the 1st ver., according to which this prayer is intended only for the pious and righteous posterity of David; and, finally, by the circumstance that the fundamental thought of the Psalm, the clinging of helplessness when near destruction to eternal omnipotence and love, occurs also in Ps. ciii., ver. 15–17.

The suppliant prays and hopes sometimes for himself and sometimes for Sion. The obvious explanation of this is, that the king is the personified aggregate of the people, and especially that the prosperity and sufferings of Israel were at all times bound up with the fate of the family of David. Comp. in reference to this the very characteristic passage, Lam. iv. 20, "Our breath, the anointed of the Lord was taken in their pits of whom we said, Under his shadow we shall live among the nations."

The reference to the family of David is intentionally less prominent here and also in Ps. ciii. than it is in Ps. ci. The title itself shews that next to its main design in connection with Ps. ci., it was generally designed for suffering righteousness.

The representation, which here lies at the bottom, of severe sufferings awaiting the royal family and Sion, must be considered as entirely natural to David. Behind him lay the painful events of the period of the Judges. He himself had on many occasions drunk the cup of suffering to the dregs, and every man's prospects

for the future are cast after the mould of his own personal experience.

Ver. 1–10.—Ver. 1. *O Lord, hear my prayer and let my cry come to thee.* Ver. 2. *Hide not thy face from me, in the day when I am in trouble incline to me thine ear, in the day when I call hear me speedily.* Ver. 3. *For my days vanish like smoke and my bones glow like a firebrand.* Ver. 4. *My heart is smitten like grass and withered, for I forget to eat my bread.* Ver. 5. *On account of the voice of my sighing my bone cleaves to my flesh.* Ver. 6. *I am like the pelican in the wilderness, I am as an owl of ruins.* Ver. 7. *I keep watch and am like a solitary bird on the house top.* Ver. 8. *My enemies reproach me continually, and those that are mad against me are sworn against me.* Ver. 9. *For I eat ashes like bread, and mingle my drink with tears.* Ver. 10. *Because of thy wrath and anger, for thou hast lifted me up and cast me to the ground.*—On "hear my prayer," in ver. 1, comp Ps. iv. 1, xvii. 1. On "Let my cry come to thee," comp. Ps. ci. 2, and Ps. xviii. 6, "And my cry comes before him into his ear." This prayer, bearing upon the future, has for its foundation what, according to that passage, David had already experienced. In the church of God, and particularly in the kingdom of David, the optative always rests on the preterite.—In ver. 2, after "hide not thy face from me" (lit. Ps. xxvii. 9, comp. Ps. xiii. 1) there must be a point, because as "incline thine ear to me" (comp. Ps. xvii. 6, xxxi. 2) corresponds to "answer me," "in the day when I am troubled," (Ps. lix. 16, comp. xviii. 6, lxix. 17), corresponds to "in the day when I call" (Ps. lvi. 9). On "hear me speedily," comp. Ps. xxxi. 2. David designedly puts into the lips of his suffering family the same words which had already been heard when uttered by him in his own trouble. Behind the fore-ground of simple petitions there is everywhere concealed a rich back-ground of invitations to hope and confidence.—On the first half of ver. 4 comp. Ps. xxxvii. 20, "For the wicked shall perish, and the enemies of the Lord vanish away as the joy of lambs, as smoke (properly "into smoke," as here) they vanish away," Ps. lxviii. 2. There appears to be a decided reference to this passage: the sufferer complains that the lot which belongs only to the wicked appears to fall upon him notwithstanding his righteousness, Ps. ci. Where this last exists,

God must necessarily remove this appearance. The point of comparison with the *smoke* is the fleeing past, the disappearing. In reality, the language does not refer to the personal existence of the life of the individual, but to the duration of the dominion of the seed of David. The מוקד signifies neither fire nor a hearth, but something that is burnt, a *firebrand;* the feminine מוקדה, Lev. vi. 2, used of the whole heap of fuel, corresponds to the plural, firebrands, in Is. xxxiii. 14. The נחר is burnt, has been kindled, Ps. lxix. 3. *The bones,*—as the foundation of corporeal existence, as the interior fortress of the body, to which the rest stands related as external work, comp. Ps. vi. 2, xxxi. 10, xlii. 10. The *burning* is not that of fever but of *pain.* There is an abbreviated comparison: deep pain penetrates my marrow and bones, as if there were kindled in them a burning fire, and destroys me, comp. Jer. xx. 9.—The heart comes into notice, in ver. 4, as the seat of vital power. The sense is: my vital power is exhausted, for in my deep distress I loathe all food. *As grass,*—which *is struck* and injured by men or by the sun (Ps. cxxi. 6), or in any other way, comp. Jon. iv. 7, "And the worm smote the gourd, and it withered." What the sap is for plants, which is withdrawn when they are smitten, that nourishment is for the heart of men, comp. Ps. civ. 15, "Bread strengtheneth man's heart;" Gen. xviii. 5,—without nourishment, it is as if it were struck, and were withering away. The כי corresponding to the מן in ver. 5, is hence altogether suitable as an affirming particle, and we cannot translate with Luther: "so that I forget," comp. 1 Sam. xxviii. 20, where it is said of Saul, "There was no strength in him, for he had eaten no bread that whole day and that whole night." On "I forget to eat my bread," *i. e.,* all pleasure in eating has left me, comp. Ps. cvii. 18, "Their soul abhorreth all manner of food," 1 Sam. xx. 34, where Jonathan eats nothing in consequence of distress about David, 1 Sam. i. 7, where it is said of Hannah, "she wept and ate nothing," 1 Kings xxi. 4.—On "because of the voice of my sighing," in ver. 5, comp. Ps. xxxi. 10, "For my life is spent with *grief* and my years with *sighing,*" Ps. xxxii. 3, "When my bones wasted away through my *howling* continually." The clause "My bone cleaves to my flesh," is usually taken as descriptive of extreme *emaciation,* with reference to Ps. xxii. 17. But this is mani-

festly to accommodate not to expound. There, and in the dependant passage, Job xix. 20, "My bone cleaveth to my skin and to my flesh," that state of weakness and relaxation of the bones is manifestly described, which is brought on by severe pain and long continued distress, when they lose their force and vigorous power of motion; comp. the opposite in Is. lviii. 11, lxvi. 14, and the parallel passage: they cleave on, hang upon the flesh as the feeble and exhausted tongue does in a beast of burden, comp. also Ps. cxxxvii. 6, (where דבק occurs also with ל) and xxii. 15.—In the *second* half of the first strophe we have the *loneliness* of the sufferer—enemies all round, and nowhere in the whole world a helper—as in the *first* his *misery*.—As the שקד in ver. 7 signifies to watch only in the sense of to keep *watch*, we must assume that there is an abbreviated comparison: I watch as constantly as one who stands upon the watch, comp. Ps. lxxvii. 6. The watching according to the connection and the comparison is brought in only by the discomfort arising from the loneliness. Like *a lonely bird*,—a poor helpless little bird, which has been deprived of its mate or its young, and is left alone in the wide world.—On "my enemies reproach me," ver. 8, comp. Ps. xlii. 10. The part in Poel מהוללי, occurs in Song of Sol. ii. 2 in the sense of *mad*. Here "my mad ones," with a word to be supplied from the first clause, stands instead of "my mad *enemies*." *They swear by me*, inasmuch as they say: may God let it go with you or me as it does with that miserable man, comp. Num. v. 21, 27, Jer. xxix. 22, Is. lxv. 15, Ps. xliv. 14.—In ver. 8, 9, we have the ground of the reproach of the enemies against the solitary one, his deep misery.[a] The mourner sits on the ground as descriptive of his low state and his being struck down, Is. iii. 26, or lays himself upon it, Ps. xliv. 25, where are dust and ashes, (Is. xlvii. 1, lii. 2), which are swallowed by him who lies or sits there; comp. Is. lxv. 25, "the serpent, dust is its meat," and the phrase "to lick the dust of the feet of any one," for to throw one's self down before him. The idea is a false one, that ashes, which come into notice only as they lie with other impurities on the dirty ground, have any special relation to the mourner. This is opposed by the fact, that ashes in such passages are partly

a Ven.: As this most mournful condition appears contrary to the privileges of those who are favoured of God, there thence arises occasion for laughing at the pious.

joined with the dust, as Job xxx. 19, xlii. 6, partly *interchanged* with it, as Job ii. 8 and ver 12. Instead of "I mingle my drink with weeping," some read "I weep instead of eat," comp. at Ps. xlii. 3, lxxx. 5; here the tears fall into the drink.—On "because of thy wrath and anger," in ver. 10, comp. Ps. xxxviii, 1, 3. In the second clause the expression is taken from a storm of wind, which first lifts up the object which it seizes, and then dashes it to the ground; comp. Job xxvii. 21, "an east wind carrieth him away, and it goes and storms him away from his place."

Ver. 11–17.—Ver. 11. *My days are as a shadow that declineth, and I am withered like grass.* Ver. 12. *And thou, O Lord, art enthroned for ever, and thy memorial from generation to generation.* Ver. 13. *Thou shalt arise, have mercy on Sion, for it is time that thou be gracious to her, for the point of time is come.* Ver. 14. *For thy servants have pleasure in her stones, and she mourns over her dust.* Ver. 15. *And the heathen shall fear the name of the Lord, and all kings of the earth thy glory.* Ver. 16. *For the Lord builds Sion, he appears in his glory.* Ver. 17. *He turns to the prayer of the destitute, and despises not their prayer.*—That ver. 11 is not to be read along with the preceding verses, but like ver. 23 forms the introduction of the new strophe is clear from this, that the discourse is not here as it is in the second half of the first strophe of the loneliness, but only of the misery of the miserable one, from the literal reference to ver. 4, a reference so literal that it is suitable only for a repetition which resumes the subject, and finally from the אֲנִי to which the "thou," in the beginning of ver. 12 corresponds. The Psalmist here ties together in one bundle his whole misery, as described in the first strophe, and all his helplessness, and throws it with one mighty fling upon the Eternal. As a bent *wall*, in Ps. lxii. 3, is a wall which has already begun to sink, a bent *shadow* here is one which is already going to destruction. The figurative expression is just taken from a wall, Ps. cix. 23, cxliv. 4. The discourse, according to the preceding context, does not relate "generally to the sudden destruction of the transitory life of man," but to the destruction which specially threatens the family of David and the church of God in him, comp. especially ver. 3, and also ver. 23, 24. The "thou" in ver. 12 stands in strong opposition to the "I" in ver. 11. The *sitting* is no empty *remaining*,

but a sitting as king, a sitting on a *throne*, comp. at Ps. xxix. 10, "the Lord sitteth as King for ever," and Ps. ix. 7, "and the Lord is enthroned for ever." Though the symptoms of the destruction of the family of David (the culminating point of which family was Christ), and of the church be ever so threatening, the eternal dominion of the Lord forms the sure guarantee for its maintenance. Whoever wishes to destroy it, must first put down God from his throne, which throughout eternity shall never be done. The consolation does not rest on the mere eternal dominion of God—in certain circumstances this may be as sure a pledge of the destruction of the sufferer—but on this truth that this eternally reigning God is the God of the miserable Psalmist, and has made himself known as such by word and by deed—a truth which is here taken for granted. On the *memorial* of God, his historically manifested attributes, compare at Ps. xxx. 4. Allusion is here made to the historical manifestations of the exceeding love of God towards his people and towards David, in whom the whole people were comprehended for eternity under one head. God can never disown his own manifested character. Lam. v. 19 depends on our verse, "And thou, O Lord, sittest for ever, thy throne is from generation to generation."—On "thou shalt rise," in ver. 13, comp. Ps. iii. 7, xii. 5, lxviii. 1. On "thou shalt have mercy on Sion, Ps. ciii. 13. By *the point of time* (comp. at Ps. lxxv. 2), those who refer the Psalm to the period of the captivity, suppose the seventy years of Jeremiah to be meant; but had these been meant, the expression would have been much more definite; the title, moreover, is against this view, as also is the character of the Psalm, according to which it is intended for no special historical occasion, but for the present state, whatever that may be, of the miserable. The point of time for having compassion upon Sion is rather that which is present when her sufferings have reached their height, and she herself stands at the brink of the abyss. This is evident from the prayer being based upon the greatness of God in ver. 1–10, from the following verse beginning with the connecting particle "for," in which the Psalmist expressly grounds his assertion, that the point of time has come. The רצה in ver. 13, with the accus. is to find pleasure in any thing, Ps. lxii. 4; Job xiv. 6; Ps. lxxxv. 1. That the stones and the dust of Sion are not to be considered here

as materials for its new erection (Luther, for thy servant would be glad that it were rebuilt, and would see with pleasure its stones and lime prepared) is manifest from the "mourned over." We are hence by stones and dust to understand the ruins and the rubbish, comp. Neh. iii. 34, iv. 4. There lies at the foundation a comparison of the church of God in its low condition to a *building* in ruins, and probably there is a special allusion to Lev. xiv. 45, where it is said of the leprous house, the type of the unclean church, "And he destroys the house, its *stones*, and its wood, and all the *dust* of the house, and brings it out before the city to an unclean place," comp. ver. 41, 42. That the stones and the dust belong here only to the *figure*, and that the real allusion is to the low condition and ruinous state of Sion (comp. at Ps. lxix. 35, vol. ii. 367), is clear from the title, according to which, the Psalm is to be used in *any* distress, and from the circumstance, that the descriptions of the miserable condition are throughout general and poetical, and that there are no traces whatever of the destruction of Jerusalem. The "for" at the beginning is not co-ordinate with the "for" in ver. 13 (we must be on our guard against such co-ordinate "fors"), but it grounds the last position made there: the point of time has come, for Sion lies in ruins, to the pain of thy faithful ones to whom thou art a gracious God, and whom thou canst not turn away, when they come before thee, with a "when we in severest trouble are."[a] —In ver. 15, we have the glorious consequences and fruit which flow from the divine compassion on Sion. The world shall be powerfully brought to the Lord when it sees how gloriously he takes up the cause of his church,—a hope which is fulfilled in Christ. What, in point of form, is expressed as a prophecy, has, at the same time, in reality, the force of an exhortation addressed to God, that, for the furtherance of his glory, he would cause the lowly state of Sion to be followed by one of exaltation;[b] comp., in reference to the thought, Ps. lxviii. 28 ss. Is. lix. 19 depends on our passage. The preter., in ver. 16, 17, which represent the ground on which

a On "for thy servants have pleasure in her stones," Calvin: The more sad the desolation of the church is, the less ought we to be alienated from its love. This compassion ought rather to call forth from us groans and sighs.

b Calvin: The prophet describes the fruit of deliverance because the glory of God is by it rendered illustrious to nations and kings themselves, by which he tacitly declares, that the glory of God is impaired by the oppression of the church.

the heathen shall be moved to fear the Lord, relate not to an external, but to an inward sight. The ערער, probably a word of the Psalmist's own formation, in ver. 17, is properly *one entirely naked, destitute of all human means of help;* Ven.: "deprived of all good, help, and consolation." *And he despises not;* Ps xxii. 4, lxix. 33.

Ver. 18–27.—Ver. 18. *This shall be written to the generation to come, and the people which shall be created shall praise the Lord.* Ver. 19. *For he looks from his holy height, the Lord looks from heaven upon the earth.* Ver. 20. *That he may hear the groaning of the prisoners, that he may relieve the dying.* Ver. 21. *In order that in Sion the name of the Lord may be made known, and his praise in Jerusalem.* Ver. 22. *When the nations assemble all together and the kingdoms to serve the Lord.* Ver. 23. *He has weakened in the way his strength, shortened my days.* Ver. 24. *I say: My God, take me not away at the half of my days, thy years continue for ever and ever.* Ver. 25. *Thou hast of old founded the earth, and the heavens are the work of thy hands.* Ver. 26. *They shall perish and thou remainest, and they shall all like a garment wax old, like to a vesture thou changest them, and they shall be changed.* Ver. 27. *And thou art he, and thy years have no end.*—On ver. 18, comp. Ps. xxii. 30, "it shall be told of the Lord to the (future) generation," xlviii. 13, lxxviii. 4, according to which parallel passages we cannot translate "may it," but only "it shall be written." The עם נברא is, according to the עם נולד in Ps. xxii. 31, to be explained; the people which is created then, *i. e.*, in the time of the future generation. The preter. in ver. 19 are either to be referred to doings of the Lord which are going on, as Ps. xxxiii. 13,—*he looks*, as the fore-mentioned fact, the glorious salvation shews which he has prepared for his anointed and for his people, or they refer *directly* to the latter, he looked, as the preterites in ver. 16 and 17. On the first clause comp. at Ps. xiv. 2. The fundamental passage is Deut. xxvi. 15, "look from thy holy habitation, from heaven, and bless thy people Israel. On the מרום comp. at Ps. xviii. 16. The rarely used אנקה in ver. 21, in all only four times, is probably a word of David's own formation, comp. Ps. xii. 5. In reference to the בני תמותה, *the dying*, comp. at Ps. lxxix. 11. There can be the

less doubt that it is borrowed from the passage before us, as the "sons of those bound" occurs also in that passage. To *deliver*—from the snares of hell, from the dangers of death, Ps. xviii. 4, 5. On ver. 21 compare Ps. xxvi. 7. *Those who make known* are partly Israel, partly the heathen brought by the salvation of Israel to the Lord.—On ver. 23 compare Ps. xxii. 27, lxviii. 32, ii. 11. The second half of the strophe begins, apparently only in ver. 23, with a renewed *complaint*. This serves merely as the foundation and ascent to confidence. That this *way* is the way of life, is manifest from ver. 24, compare Ps. lv. 23. Allusion is made, as appears to Ex. xviii. 8, "and all the travel that had come upon them by the way, and how the Lord delivered them" (compare Numb. xvii. 27, 28, xx. 14); and the sense is, as on a former occasion, in the way through the wilderness. David and Israel were in the wilderness until they reached the glorious end set before them, viz., the dominion of the world, until the kingdom of glory was entered upon. It is a great trial when in this course strength seems to fail. Exhaustion and feebleness, however, will be always merely transitory; youthful vigour will infallibly return, comp. Ps. ciii. 5. In the words "*his* strength," the difference between the Psalmist and the sufferer, between David and his posterity, becomes prominent. The Masorites were not able to understand the passage, all the less, as no further on than the second clause David again speaks from the soul of his posterity, and therefore they substituted כֹּחִי instead of כֹּחוֹ. On the second clause compare ver. 3, 11. The *shortening of the day* exists only in appearance, a threatening sufficient to cause alarm that it may be so, compare ver. 24, Ps. ciii. 5. The עָלָה in Hiph., in ver. 24, should signify *to hurry off;* but for this sense there is no proof. The *cause to ascend* looks back to the figure of smoke which had been employed in ver. 4; and עָלָה is used as referring to this in Gen. xix. 28, Jer xlviii. 15, where it is used instead of *to go away in smoke*. To be hurried off in the middle of their days is the lot of the wicked (compare Ps. lv. 23), from whose way of thinking the Psalmist had separated himself in Ps. ci., and on the ground of which he here prays that he may not be involved in their fate. The second clause in reality is connected with the first by a "for." It contains the *basis* of the prayer uttered there: for thou art eternal, and therefore also thy mercy and

grace towards thine own are eternal, thine anointed and thy people whom thou canst never give up to destruction; they must reach the goal of glory.—Ver. 25-27 expound the infinitely consolatory thought of the eternity of God—the God of Sion and of David never dies; David and Sion therefore can never die, for he has inseparably connected himself with them,—inasmuch as they render prominent his imperishable nature by contrasting it with the perishing nature of that which relatively is the most imperishable; in the second half of ver. 27 the thought of the second half of ver. 24 returns after having had its basis assigned it in the intermediate verses.—On ver. 25 compare Ps. viii. 3, xix. 2, xxiv. 2, xxxiii. 6. Reference is not made here to the fact of the creation of the world, in proof of the eternity of God—for the subject after ver. 24 and 27 is not the eternity but the immutability of God—but as a basis on which to rest the announcement made in ver, 26, as to the *annihilation* of the world, "what our God has made, that he can" not only "*maintain*" but also annihilate; heaven and earth shall pass away as being things that have been created, but the Lord shall remain as being he who created them.—Is. li. 6 depends upon ver. 26: there are other undoubted traces in the second part of Isaiah of use having been made of Ps. ci.-ciii. *They all*—heaven and earth with their *fulness*, all that is in them. The comparison to a *garment* in the last clause refers to the ease with which a garment is *laid aside*. The חָלַף is *to perish*, as in Ps. xc. 5, 6, in Hiph. *to change*. The change refers not to the origin of a new heavens and a new earth, Is. lxv. 17, lxvi. 22, but as is shewn by the relation of the changing to the perishing, of the cause to the effect, to transition from a state of existence to a state of non-existence. In accordance with the context it is only the *perishing* not the *renovation* (Matth. xix. 28), that is here contemplated, only death, not the resurrection and the glorification. Many expositors, on the ground of such passages as Job xiv. 12, where in popular language this last hidden event is overlooked, or apparently derived (similar passages occur also in the New Testament, comp. Matth. v. 18), have very foolishly attempted to *set aside* the fact that the the doctrine of the future destruction of the present fabric of the world is taught in this passage, and refer to mere *possibility*, what is very expressly affirmed of *reality*. There is the less rea-

son for this, as such a doctrine is very manifestly taught in other passages of Scripture; comp., besides the passages already quoted from Is., chap. liv. 10, Matth. xxiv. 35, Luke xxi. 31, and the proper classical passage in the New Testament, 2 Pet. iii. 7, 10, 11. The foundation of this doctrine, to which the Psalmist himself refers in ver. 25, as such is laid at the very beginning of the Scriptures, in what is there taught as to the creation of all things out of nothing. If the Lord has created the heavens and the earth by the exercise of his omnipotence, he not only *can* but will change them when they no longer fulfil their destination: when in the church of God every thing has become new, the announcement, "Behold I make all things new," must be uttered in reference also to the place of habitation.—In ver. 27, the translation usually given is: thou art the same. But this sense is not an ascertained one; it does not suit in the fundamental passage, Deut. xxxii. 39, "Behold now, I am he," or in the parallel passage, Is. xliii. 10, and it does not answer very well even the connection here, for it is not so much the *unchangeableness* as the *imperishable nature* of God that is spoken. We must translate: "Thou art he to whom this appertains,—thou, and not the heavens and the earth, art imperishable," exactly corresponding to "Thy years are through all generations," and to the second clause.

In ver. 28, we have the result of the whole.—*The sons of thy servants shall dwell, and their seed be established before thee.*—The servants of the Lord are the whole people, who, from their ancestry, serve God; the sons of thy servants, and their seed, are the present suffering generation; instead of "thy servants," here we have "Jacob," in Is. lxv. 9. The exposition, "if not we, yet, at least, our children," is contrary to the fresh spirit of faith of Scripture, and without analogy. *Shall dwell,*—in opposition to those who wander about without roof or home, comp. at Ps. lxviii. 6, *more exactly,* "dwell in the *land of the Lord,*" Ps. xxxvii. 29, lxix. 35, 36, with which concluding verse, the one before us is very strikingly connected. On "before thee," comp. Gen. xvii. 1, Ps. lxxxix. 36; the clause "shall be established," Ps. lxxxix. 37, ci. 7, forms the contrast to the perishing and the vanishing away, ver. 3, 4, 23, 24. The "shall not be established" there forms the foundation of "it shall be established" here.

PSALM CIII.

Praise the Lord, O my soul, for he has crowned thee with favour and compassion, ver. 1–5, he is full of kindness and pity towards his *church*, ver. 6–10. His kindness is *infinite* towards us poor mortals, ver. 11–14, the only and sure help to his people in the weakness and nothingness of human existence, ver. 15–18. O, my highly favoured soul, do thou also praise him who *rules* over the whole world, and is praised by the whole world, ver. 19–22.

The Psalm, in regard to number, is an alphabetical one, harmonised in such a way as that the concluding turns back into the introductory verse, the whole being in this manner finished and rounded off. In like manner, the name Jehovah occurs eleven times. The Psalm is divided into two strophes, the first of ten and the second of twelve verses. The ten is divided by the five, and the twelve falls into three divisions, each of four verses. Jehovah occurs in the first strophe four, and in the second seven times.

The Psalm bears the character of quiet tenderness. It is a still clear brook of the praise of God. In accordance with this, we find that the verses are of equal length as to structure, and consist regularly of two members. It is only at the conclusion, where the tone rises, that the verses become longer: the vessel is too small for the feeling.

The testimony which the Title bears on behalf of the composition of the Psalm by David, is confirmed by the fact that the Psalm in passages, the independence of which cannot be mistaken, bears a striking resemblance to the other Psalms of David (comp. the exposition), and by the connection with Ps. cii.—David here teaches his posterity to *render thanks*, as there he had taught them to *pray:* the deliverance from deep distress which formed there the subject of prayer, forms here the subject of thanks—and with Ps. ci.; comp. the Introd. to that Psalm. In accordance with what was observed there, we find first an individual person speaking, ver. 1–5, the seed of David, from whose soul David gives thanks; this individual person, however, bears a comprehensive character, is inwardly identical with the whole congregation, so that without any mark of the change, the com-

munity speaks from ver. 6, and again towards the conclusion it is a single individual that speaks.

Ver. 1–10.—Ver. 1. *By David. Praise, O my soul, the Lord, and all that is in me his holy name.* Ver. 2. *Praise, my soul, the Lord, and forget not all his gifts,* Ver. 3. *Who forgiveth thee all thine iniquity, who healeth all thy infirmities.* Ver. 4. *Who delivereth thy life from the grave, who crowneth thee with pity and tender mercies.* Ver. 5. *Who satisfieth thy beauty with good things, so that thy youth is renewed like the eagle.* Ver. 6. *The Lord executed righteousness and judgment for all oppressed.* Ver. 7. *He made known his ways to Moses, his mighty deeds to the children of Israel.* Ver. 8. *Compassionate and gracious is the Lord, long suffering and rich in kindness.* Ver. 9. *He contends not always, and keeps not up for ever.* Ver. 10. *He deals not towards us according to our sins, and does not give to us according to our iniquities.*—On the first clause of ver. 1, comp. Ps. xxxiv. 2, 3. The thrice repeated "praise," properly "bless," (twice at the beginning and once at the end), to which the thrice repeated "praise" in ver. 20–22, corresponds, stands in reference to the three-membered Mosaic blessing, Num. vi. 24–26: the soul, which has experienced the strength of the "bless thee," is exhorted to "bless;" he who has been blessed and refuses to bless has sunk from the state of a man to that of a beast. Berleb.: "The smitten and death-struck soul again brought to life, feeling the joy of its new freedom, and the enjoyment of its deliverance, flows out, in testimony of its gratitude, entirely in praise and thanksgiving. He has, says such a man, delivered thee by his goodness from thine own cares. Thou hast therefore only one thing to do, namely to occupy thyself singly and alone with offering to him praise and thanks. This for the future should be thy only employment." On קֶרֶב, the *inward part*, comp. at Ps. v. 9. The inward part where the heart is (comp. Ps. xxxix. 3, "my heart was hot within me), stands here in contrast to what is external, the mere lips, with which even the unthankful give thanks—Berleb.: "Men often say from mere custom, *God be thanked* or *praised*, and this rather externally, without any inward tender gratitude, than in spirit and in truth"—comp. Ps. lxii. 4, "with the mouth they bless, and with their inward part they curse." The plural of the קֶרֶב,

and the "all" are particularly emphatic. It adds besides the contrast of the heart to the mouth, that of the whole heart against the half of it; comp. at the "my one heart," and "with the whole heart," in Ps. lxxxvi. 11, 12. The address to the soul, by no means a mere figurative expression, stands in contrast to a superficial lip service. The fundamental passage is Deut. vi. 5, "thou shalt love (and therefore also praise, for praise grows out of love) the Lord with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy strength." *His holy name*—him who by his deeds has manifested himself as the holy and the adorable one, comp. at Ps. xxii. 3.—In ver. 2 the positive exhortation is repeated for the purpose of adding to it the negative one about to be emphatically sounded forth. David knew too well from experience the forgetfulness of the human heart not to consider it necessary to remind his posterity of it. For that under the "I will not forget" there lies concealed a "forget thou not" is clear from the above remarks. Berleb.: "Let us all therefore still address our forgetful heart on all occasions. Ah! may we still impress upon our souls on all occasions, by the help of the Holy Ghost, forget not what good things the Lord has done for thee! Yea, "forget not" should always be rung in our hearts, because they so early forget. Allusion is made to the words of Moses, "forget not the Lord thy God who brought thee out of the land of Egypt," &c., in Deut. vi. 12, viii. 11, 14; compare Deut. xxxii. 15. On גְּמוּל, *to bestow gifts*, compare at Ps. vii. 4. "All his gifts," stands in reference to "all that is in me." It is only he who has given sparingly that feels satisfied with half thanks. On the first clause of ver. 2 compare Ps. xxv. 11, li. 9, and lxxxvi. 5. According to the connection and parallelism, the forgiveness of sin is a *matter-of-fact* one; it becomes known in the bringing about of salvation. On the Jod and the suf. here, and in ver. 4 and 5, compare Ew. § 258. The manifestly designed repetition shews that it is no incidental Arameism but a poetical form. That the *sicknesses* figuratively refers to *sufferings* (many expositors suppose that *moral* infirmities are meant, which, however, will not suit the connection), is clear from the fundamental passage, Deut. xxix. 22, "when they see the plagues of this land and the *sicknesses* which the Lord hath laid on it," and Ex. xv. 26, "If thou wilt hearken to the voice of the Lord thy God, . . I will not

send upon thee the *sickness* which I brought upon the Egyptians (in reference to the plagues of Egypt). . . . for I the Lord am thy *physician*." The Psalmist praises the Lord because he had *removed* the fulfilment of the *threatening* contained in the first clause, and had *brought about* the fulfilment of the *promise* of the second.—*From the grave*, ver. 4, compare at Ps. xvi. 10, xxx. 9, to which the Psalmist had been very near, comp. "my life is near to hell," Ps. lxxxviii. 3, lxviii. 20, xlviii. 14. The preceding Psalm complains of *impending* danger of death, and hopes in it. *Thy life*—he, the God of thy life, Ps. xlii. 8. *Who crowns thee*, Ps. lxv. 11, *with kindness and compassion*, Ps. xxv. 6, xl. 11.—In ver. 5 all translations are to be set aside as arbitrary, and not worth mentioning, which take עֶדְיִי in any other sense than in the only one which is ascertained, and which also occurs in Ps. xxxii. 9, that viz. of *ornament* or *beauty*. That the Psalmist by his *beauty* denotes his *soul* as his better part, is clear from the fact that the corresponding expression "my glory," as denoting the soul, is a favourite one with David, (compare at Ps. lvii. 8), and from the fact that to *satisfy* the soul as the seat of the desires and wishes, is a phrase of constant occurrence, comp. Ps. cvii. 9, "for he satisfies the longing soul, and fills the hungry soul with good," Is. lviii. 11, "God satisfies in thirsty places thy soul," Ps. lxiii. 5, xxv. 13. The objection that the Psalmist addresses his soul, and cannot call his soul the beauty of his soul, has no force. For in the preceding clauses the idea of the whole person represented by the soul as the better part, had imperceptibly come into the place of that of the soul; and the soul is therefore named as the ornament of the person, compare "who healeth all thy sicknesses," and "who delivereth thy life from the grave." In reference to the poetical connection of the plural with the feminine singular in the second clause, compare. Ew. § 307. We cannot translate: like that of the eagle, but only, like the eagle, the comparison as is the case very frequently (comp. Ew. § 221, Lam. v. 21), being merely *intimated*, instead of "as is the case with the eagle," "so that in point of strength thou art like the eagle." The Scripture knows nothing of the idea that the eagle when old renews its youth. That there is nothing of this kind contained in Is. xl. 31, which is commonly appealed to, but that it is rather the powerful flight of the eagle that is there

referred to, "they mount up on wings like the eagle, they run and are not weary," is evident from the parallel, to *fly*, *run*, *march*. The want of the copula before the second clause, shews that the goodness with which the soul is satisfied, is just the *renewing* of the youth, the high privilege of the royal family of David which is continually verified as ages run on. Old age, in other cases always the forerunner of death, is here continually the forerunner of youth; the greater the *failure* of strength is, so much the nearer is the entire renewal of strength. How completely worn out with old age was the family of David at the time of the first appearance of Christ!—From the favour of God towards the royal family of David, the Psalmist turns in the second half of the strophe to that towards the church, whose weal and wo were intimately and indissolubly bound up with those of the royal race, which in it and with it is crowned with kindness and compassion, satisfied with good things, and raised to fresh and powerful youth. That by "all oppressed ones" in ver. 6, we are to understand "his people in all oppressions," is evident from what follows; compare the praise of the care of God for widows and orphans, in special reference to the suffering *church*, in Ps. lxviii. 5. The צדקות, *righteousnesses*, is manifestations of righteousness, as משפטים is right actions.—*The ways of the Lord* in ver. 7 are his safe guidance, and the making known is a matter-of-fact one; comp. at Ps. xxv. 4, "thy ways, O Lord, make known to me," instead of "manifest to me thy safe guidance,"—our passage serves to confirm the interpretation given there, Ps. lxvii. 2. All these passages depend upon Ex. xxxiii. 13, where Moses says to the Lord, "if I have found grace in thy sight, make known to me thy ways, and let me know thee." Moses speaks there in name of the people whose soul he was. The import of the prayer is, that the Lord would make him the object of his safe guidance, and make himself known in it. The prayer is *heard*. God promises that he himself will go before him and will lead him to rest. The reference of our verse to this fundamental passage is all the more direct, as the following verse also is unquestionably borrowed from the Pentateuch. As Moses represents the congregation of the Lord, there is no reason for taking יודיע in the sense of a preterite; God always makes known his ways to Moses,—the discourse even in the whole paragraph is of what God does continually. *His mighty deeds*, Ps. ix. 11,

lxxviii. 11.—Ver. 8 depends upon Ex. xxxiv. 6, comp. the repetition just as literal in Is. ii. 13, Ps. lxxxvi. 15, and the references as entirely undeniable in Ps. lxxviii. 38, cxi. 4, Nah. i. 3. These passages shew what a deep impression had been made upon the Israelitish mind by this great and consolatory saying which alone ought to have annihilated all the dreams of Moloch. —On the thought of ver. 9, comp. Ps. xxx. 5. Is. lvii. 16, depends upon the first clause: "for I will contend for ever." The circumstance that the ואמת of the fundamental passage is omitted, shews how close is the connection here with the *preceding* clause. The second clause depends upon Lev. xix. 18, "thou shalt not be revengeful nor bear any grudge לא תטר, against the children of thy people." In strict theological exposition, the Psalmist sees in the passage a proof of the inclination of God, whose commandments are so many illustrations of his nature to forgive his people. He would destroy his own law were he not to do so. Nah. i. 2 again depends on one passage: "the Lord will take vengeance on his adversaries, and he keepeth wrath (not assuredly for his people, of whom the declaration of the Psalmist holds true, but still) for his enemies," and Lev. iii. 5, 12.—That the preterites in ver. 10, and also the preceding futures, are to be translated as presents, and refer to the constant doings of God, is evident from ver. 11–14, especially ver. 14, where the pret. does not give the least meaning. He *deals not with us according to our sins*, as he has threatened in Lev. xxvi. 21: he does this only to mere despisers. The "with us"—the fearers of God—must be carefully attended to. Otherwise the ungrounded inference which the Berleb. B. deduces will meet us: "punishments hence cannot be absolutely eternal, otherwise he would undoubtedly act towards us (?) according to our sins." The גמל, to give, in ver 2. with the על is to gift, as here, at Ps. xiii. 6.

Ver. 11–22.—Ver. 11. *For as high as heaven is above the earth, his mercy is mighty over those who fear him.* Ver. 12. *As far as the east is from the west, so far does he remove our transgressions from us.* Ver. 13. *As a father pitieth his children, so the Lord pitieth them who fear him.* Ver. 14. *For he knoweth our frame, he remembereth that we are dust.* Ver. 15. *Man is, in his life, like grass, like a flower of the field, so he blossoms.* Ver. 16. *For a wind goes over it, and it is gone and*

its place knows it no more. Ver. 17. *And the mercy of the Lord endureth from eternity to eternity over those who fear him, and his righteousness to the children's children.* Ver. 18. *With those who keep his covenant and remember his commandments to do accordingly.* Ver. 19. *The Lord has in heaven prepared his throne, and his kingdom ruleth over all.* Ver. 20. *Praise the Lord, ye his angels, ye strong warriors, who perform his word, you that listen to the voice of his word.* Ver. 21. *Praise the Lord, all his hosts, his servants, who do his pleasure.* Ver. 22. *Praise the Lord, all his works, in all places of his dominion. Praise the Lord, O my soul.*—In ver. 11 the point of comparison is infinity.[a] The verse is independently allied to the two Davidic passages, Ps. xxxvi. 5, lvii. 10. "Ye who fear him," is expanded in ver. 18. It is not a vague "sense of dependance," but the living knowledge of his holiness (at Ps. xxii. 3), which calls forth child-like and unreserved obedience to his revealed will. The region of God's fatherly love extends only so far as this does. The Psalmist every where speaks not of what God is towards the *human family*, but of what he is towards his *church*.—The infinite mercy of ver. 11 is verified in the forgiveness of sin of ver. 12.—On ver. 13, comp. Deut. xxx. 3. What is there said of Israel is here said of those who fear the Lord. These are identical with Israel as soon as the false seed are excluded from the latter. What especially moves God to shew fatherly pity to his people is, according to ver. 14, the misery of their earthly condition, which appears altogether to cut them off from the riches of his fatherly care.[b] Comp. in reference to the thought at Ps. lxxviii. 39, lxxxix. 47, and in our (German), spiritual poetry the words, "we are still poor worms, dust and ashes, laden with sin, weakness, trouble, and death, wherefore should we be destroyed in thy wrath without any pity." The יֵצֶר, the form, the nature, is used in the Pentateuch to denote the moral nature of man, Gen.

a Amyrald. on ver. 11, 12, "The prophet here uses the largest measures which the world can afford to express a thing which can scarcely be expressed in any other way."

b Calv.: "This is carefully to be attended to, lest our misery retard or impair our confidence, for in porportion as our condition is miserable and despised, is God inclined to pity, since, indeed, in order to do us good, he is content with even dust and ashes." Berleb. B.: "All unbelief and dejection should be ashamed of itself and be put to shame, which does not give to God the glory of interesting himself in his creatures and of feeling for their misery."

vi. 5, viii. 21, Deut. xxxi. 21, and here, according to the reference to the fundamental passage, Gen. ii. 7, his physical nature. According to this passage, "and the Lord God *formed* וייצר man as *dust* of the earth," the second clause contains the development of the first: he knows our form that we are dust, transitory, and hence frail, weak, and miserable. In like manner, the first clause is to be supplied out of it: He, as our former, knows our form. The use of the passive part. זכור is to be here explained from the passive nature of memory.—Ver. 15–18: in the transitory, and, as caused by this, the feeble and helpless nature of the human condition, we must *despair*, were it not that we had a sure ground of hope in the eternal mercy of the Lord, which is exercised towards those who fear him, those of the latest no less than those of the earliest generations. This paragraph agrees so very strikingly in thought and expression with Ps. xc. 1–5 (the transitory nature, and the miserable condition of life on earth, leads us to God as our only refuge), that David without doubt drew it from Moses. The *eternal word* of the Lord in Is. xl. 6–8 is opposed to men as grass, just as his *eternal mercy* is here. That the borrowing is on the side of Isaiah is clear from the references in which the peculiar expression (which, like many other expressions in the passage, are generally misunderstood by expositors: all his mercy (all mercy and all help which flesh can show and secure) is as the flower of the field) stands to the clause here, ver. 17, "the mercy of the Lord is from eternity," &c.: the fact also that the thought here is much more simple, is in favour of this view.—The first clause of ver. 15 is literally: a man, as grass are his days, he who has his name from frailty (comp. at Ps. viii. 4) perishes as quickly as the grass. How could this breath help, protect, heal itself! Comp. Ps. xxxvii. 2. *Like a flower of the field so he flourishes*, for as short a time as the flower of the field flourishes does his existence last; comp. Ps. xc. 6, and the dependant passage Job xiv. 2, "as a flower he fades and is cut down."—The כי in ver. 16 is as a confirmative particle altogether in its place: he is like grass, or the flower, for as the hot, burning east wind (Gen. xli. 6, 23, Jon. iv. 8) destroys the grass and flowers after a short existence, so the wind of suffering, trouble, sickness, destroys the spiritual flower, man. The suffix in the בו refers to the spiritual flower, man. On "and he is not," comp.

Ps. xxxvii. 10. *His place*, namely in those who come into his room, *knows him* not, would not know him if he were to return, so completely is he unknown and forgotten. The second clause is quoted word for word in Job vii. 10.—Ver. 17 and 18 depend upon Deut. vii. 9, 11: the faithful God, who keepeth covenant and mercy for those who love him, and keep his commandments, for a thousand generations. . . . And thou shalt keep the commandments, and the statutes, and the judgments which I command thee this day that *thou do them*,"—a passage to which Ps. xxv. 10 refers. The *righteousness* of God, according to which he gives to every one his own, manifests itself in this, that he does not withdraw his pity from his people, not on the ground of their merit, but because his nature demands that he show himself gracious to them. *To the children's children*, therefore, not only to the fathers in the glorious past, ver. 7, but also to us in these last afflicted times.—Ver. 19–22; Praise, O my soul, the Lord, who rules over all places with his hands, whom angels above praise with their song, whom sun, moon, stars, and all his works praise. All serves to lay the foundations for this.—On the first clause of ver. 19, comp. Ps. ii. 1, ix. 7, ix. 4. The throne of God in heaven stands in contrast to the throne of those who are usually called kings, the throne of David itself upon the earth, the state of feebleness.—On ver. 20, comp. xxix. 1, 2. The exhortation in that passage goes forth to the heavenly servants of God to praise his glory and strength, in order to remove fear from the church of God on the earth; in the passage before us, to awaken it to praise God.[a] The גִּבּוֹר is always a warrior, comp. at Ps. lii. 1. The clause "to listen to the voice of his word," comp. Deut. xxvi. 18, xxx. 20, where to hearken to the voice of the Lord is connected with to love him, and to cleave to him is added for the purpose of rendering still more pointedly prominent the difference between the *spiritual* and the material portions of the heavenly hosts, which is also adverted to in the relation subsisting between those who obey his *word* and those who obey his *will* in his ver. 21. The angels serve God as conscious instruments with free love, the stars do his will only unconsciously. The marked difference between the angels and

a Amyr. in reference to this view: It has admirable force, for it cannot proceed except from singular piety and admiration of the Divine excellencies.

the stars ought to be carefully attended to. It testifies against those who would fain connect the angels more closely with the stars, and also against those who, from dislike to angels, consider them a mere personification.—The *hosts* of God are in other passages very particularly and usually the sun, moon, and stars, comp. at Ps. xxiv. 10. Here the angels are specially excluded by ver. 20. Ps. xix. 1 ought to be compared where in like manner the heavens and the firmament are enjoined to make known the glory of God, which in fact they by their very being praise.—*My soul*, ver. 22, thou who hast received so many special proofs of the glory of the Lord, hast been crowned with compassion and tender mercy. How canst thou alone remain silent, when every thing in the world praises God. Berleb: "The Psalm thus ends as it began, and by such a conclusion powerfully reminds the reader of his duty."

PSALM CIV.

In ver. 1, after an exhortation from the Psalmist to his soul to praise God, we have the *theme* or the sum of this praise, the greatness of God as seen in his works. In ver. 2–34 we have the *development* of this theme, in the description of the works of God; first the light, and heaven, and earth, then the formation of the dry land, ver. 6–9, after this the watering of the ground by the fountains, ver. 10–12, of the mountains by the rain, for the nourishment of beasts and men, ver. 13–17. From the mountains the Psalmist ascends by the means of the highest summits, which are still a place of habitation for living creatures, ver. 18, to the sun and the moon, and to what these do to the creatures of God upon the earth, ver. 19-23. From this he descends to the extreme *depth*, the sea, which conceals so many beasts in its bosom, and which by navigation is of such signal service even to the human race, ver. 24-26. All creatures get their nourishment from God; they perish and come into existence according to his will, ver. 27-30. In ver. 31-34 we have the conclusion of the development of the thesis, and of the praise of God from his works. God is eternally glorified by his works, and the Psalmist will praise him. In ver. 35 the result from the glory of God in his

works is applied to the circumstances in which the Psalmist is placed; the dominion of the wicked upon earth can be only *transitory*, God shall annihilate these his enemies; the pledge of this is his omnipotent love as revealed in his works.

As regards formal arrangement, ver. 1 and 35 are obviously the introductory and the concluding verses. In like manner we must consider the 18th verse as standing out of the formal arrangement, a verse which cannot be immediately connected with the preceding one (that one being wholly taken up with the *watering*), and which forms the transition from the first to the second half. Each of the two halves divided by it has ten verses. The divisions into which these fall stand over against each other as antistrophes. In both a main strophe of four is separated from another of twelve verses. The signatures of the *world* and of the *people of God* are connected together in one Psalm, which deduces from what God does in the *former*, what he will do for the *latter*. In the first part, ver. 2-5, the strophe of four verses is occupied with the fundamental relations in creation, the light and the formation of the heavens and the earth; in the second, ver. 31-34, where it forms the conclusion, as it does then the beginning, it contains the praise of God on account of his works. The strophe of twelve verses is in the first part divided by the seven, which again falls into the four and the three, and the five, in the second part, by the five and the seven, which is again divided by the three and the four. The name Jehovah occurs in all ten times (including the Hallelujah), in the first part three and in the second seven times. The interchange of the address to Jehovah and of the discourse about him, runs throughout the whole Psalm, as it had been introduced in the first verse. The division of the strophes, generally speaking, follows this. Still there are exceptions: ver. 13, 16, 20, 27–30, show that the Psalmist did not, in this respect, lay down for himself any definite rule, and that, in a manner somewhat arbitrary, wherever a break in the sense occurs, he makes a change.—From all this it appears that the arrangement here is peculiarly artificial, more so than we have as yet found to be the case in any other Psalm, so artificial (particularly in the antistrophe-relation of the sections of the two main divisions which was noticed by Köster), that many, such, namely, as will not take the trouble to reckon up with care will be angry at seeing it.

In fixing the *object* of the Psalm, most expositors follow Luther, who inscribes it as "a praise of God from the book of nature."* These are reasons which antecedently ought to put us on our guard against this view. The Psalmists of the Old Testament were very little fitted for mere "Psalms of nature." They were too much involved in the conflicts of the contending church, too much moved by the sufferings and the joys of Sion, its fears and its hopes, to give themselves up, in the simplicity of childhood, to the mere impressions of nature. With such pure nature-psalms, also, they would have done little to benefit the church. Always placed in the middle position, between death and life, she needed *stronger food.* She sought every where an answer to the great question prompted by her heart, "Lord, how long;" and nature had no charms except in so far as meditating upon her could contribute to furnish an answer to a question which still fills the whole heart of all the members of the church.

The *true object* of the Psalm comes out when we put together the first and the last verses, which contain the quintessence of the whole: the intermediate verses are merely a development of the first. According to this view, *the praise of God from nature* is only the *means:* the object is to quicken in the church confidence in the final victory of the righteous over the wicked, of the church of God over the world, which, at the time when the Psalm was composed, had the upper hand. From comparing the following Psalm, which is intimately connected with the one now before us, it appears that "the sinners" and "the wicked" were at that time, in a peculiar manner, raging from without against the city of God, that *the Psalmist, in a time of severe trouble, arising from the power of the heathen, sought consolation in reflecting upon the greatness of God in nature.*

From these remarks it is evident that the descriptions of nature in our Psalm occupy the same place as those of Ps. xxix., where the Psalmist describes the greatness of God in a thunderstorm, for the purpose of preparing for the church a shield against all painful cases.

According to the general relation of the whole Psalm-poetry, and also of prophecy, to the books of Moses, it cannot but be, that the Psalmist, in the praise of God from nature, hung very closely upon the first book of Genesis. The description follows in gene-

ral the succession of the several days of creation: the first and second, ver. 2–5, the third, ver. 6–18, the fourth, ver. 19–23, the fifth, ver. 24–26, and an allusion to the seventh in ver. 31. The deviations are occasioned, not only by the difference between the poet and the historian, and by the circumstance that the Psalmist has before his eyes the creation perpetually prolonged in the preservation of the world, while the historian describes the act of creation merely in itself, but also by the fact that the Psalmist has proposed for himself not the general object to represent the greatness of God universally in nature, but the special object to set forth *the greatness of God in the care which he takes of living beings.* This affords an explanation of the circumstance, that in the succession of days no mention is made of the sixth which is occupied with the *creation of these beings. The Psalmist has only this one* object in view in all that he touches upon.

The "Praise the Lord, O my soul," at the beginning and at the end of the Psalm, as also in Ps. ciii., has given occasion to many expositors to take up the idea that the title "by David" applies also to this Psalm. But these reasons are of no force. The expression, "praise the Lord, O my soul," may equally well be a borrowed one, and really bears the character of such, as it stands pretty *loose*, and the two Psalms have no such near connection as to lead us to view it as a *bond of connection* between them. That the position after Ps. ciii. not only can, but must be explained by the later Psalmist appending it to that Psalm, and that the transposition of the Davidic Psalms from their natural place in the collection of David's Psalms is to be explained from the collector wishing to connect to these something similar in character from later times, will be made manifest in some remarks which have yet to be made. We have to urge against the assumption that David is the author, first that David is not named in the title as such—the existence of Davidic Psalms not externally marked as such out of that part of the collection which is specially set apart to them is very problematical, nay, must even be distinctly denied—second, the want of all near contact with the Davidic Psalms—a feature so very prominent in Ps. ci.–ciii.—and, lastly, the hallelujah which never occurs in Psalms ascribed to David in the title, a problem worthy the attention of those who set the titles at nought.

The Psalm before us stands nearly related to the one which follows, to which again the cvi. Psalm is appended. As the confident expectation of the destruction of the heathen power is here grounded upon the greatness of the works of God in *nature*, it is in like manner there founded upon the greatness of the works of God in *history*. It is from these two Psalms that we first find materials which enable us exactly to fix the object and authorship of this whole trilogy of Psalms annexed to a similar trilogy composed by David; while in the Psalm before us, in accordance with its *introductory* character, the allusions are all *general*.

Ver. 1. *Praise, my soul, the Lord! O Lord my God thou art very great, majesty and glory hast thou put on.* The two clauses of the verse may be considered as separated by a *colon*. The exhortation to praise God is immediately followed by the praise of God in its most general extent. The, "*My* (Israel's) God," is an indication of the public character of the Psalm, of its reference to the relations of the church, as is more strongly marked at the close. The clause, "thou art very great," denotes the nature of God; what follows leads a proof of the greatness of his nature, deduced from the glory of his works. On *majesty* and *glory*, comp. at Ps. xcvi. 6. The לבש, to put on, occurs at Ps. xciii. 1, Is. li. 9. He put on these at creation; he makes it known in creation, which is continually prolonged in the preservation of the world. In the whole Psalm the discourse is not of what God is in *himself*, but of what he is in his *creation*! There lies at bottom a comparison of a glorious royal garment. As, and because, God has already put on this garment of glory and majesty in creation, he will yet put it on also in redeeming and glorifying his church, comp. Ps. xciii. 1.

Ver. 2–5.—Ver. 2. *He covers himself in light like to a garment, he spreads out the heaven like a curtain.* Ver. 3. *Who makes his upper chambers with water, makes of the clouds his chariot, who rides upon the wings of the wind.* Ver. 4. *He makes winds his angels and flaming fire his servants.* Ver. 5. *He founds the earth upon its sure foundation, it moves nbt always and eternally.*—The passage is occupied with the works of the first and second days of creation. There lies at bottom the figure of an earthly king, with his glorious garment, his high tower, his magnificent chariot, his splendid retinue of servants.

What such a one does shall be infinitely surpassed by the glory of the heavenly king. What, for example, is the garment of an earthly king, however much it may glitter with gold and precious stones, compared to the garment of light of the heavenly king! The " he covers himself," in ver. 2, is appended to " he has put on," at the conclusion of ver. 1. There the whole glory of God, unfolded in creation, appears as a garment which he has put on; here the figure of a garment is transferred to one particularly glorious part of the glory of creation, the light with the creation of which the whole work of creation began. The discourse is not here of the " inaccessible light " in which God dwells, according to 1 Tim. vi. 16; for we have here to do, as is evident from the second clause, only with the glory of God *unfolded in creation;* but of the light which daily shines upon us. We have before us, in a poetical form, " God said let there be light and there was light." The light created by God appears under the figure of a garment in which he clothes himself, because it makes him appear glorious, just as an earthly king is rendered glorious in appearance by his splendid dress. The participles denote the continued action: God, whose work of creation is prolonged in providence, clothes himself daily anew with light as with his garment, and spreads out the heaven like a curtain. The article at the garment, the covering, the waters in ver. 3, stands generically. In the second clause the Psalmist turns to the work of the *second day*, Gen. i. 6–8. *Like a curtain*,—with the same ease, by his mere word, with which a man spreads out a tent-curtain, Is. liv. 2. Is. xl. 22 is parallel, " that stretchest out the heavens as a curtain, and spreadeth them out as a tent to dwell in.—Ver. 3 continues the description of the work of the second day. There lie at bottom, in the first clause, the words of Gen. i. 7: " God made the vaulted sky and divided between the waters which are under the vault and the waters which are above the vault." The waters above are the materials with which, or out of which, the structure is reared. To construct out of the moveable waters a firm palace, the cloudy heaven, " firm as a molten glass," Job xxxvii. 18, is a magnificent work of divine omnipotence. The citadel of cloud gets the name of the *upper chamber* of God, as being the upper part of the fabric of the world; the under one is the earth, " the under-lower " of ver. 5. The translation is quite

at fault which gives: "who builds *above* the waters his upper chamber," who prepares for himself a habitation in that part of heaven which is uppermost, and furthest removed from mortal eye. The Psalm is occupied only with the *unfolded* glory of God with that which all see with their eyes, and which God does for the benefit of his creatures, and the concealed throne of God is not at all referred to; according to ver. 13, the *rain* comes out of the *upper chamber* of God. The clouds appear as the chariot of God, because he drives them about at his pleasure, as a king his car. The wind, which is not at all mentioned in the history of the creation, is joined with the clouds in the third clause, because they both operate together in bad weather. This clause depends on Ps. xviii. 9, *Who drives forward*, &c.,—to whom, as to their governor, the winds are as obedient as horses are to an earthly king.—In ver. 4 we have the glorious retinue of God's servants, the wind and flaming fire as it descends from the *clouds*, the lightning, comp. Ps. cv. 32. "For his messengers" stands first, according to the analogy of Gen. vi. 14, "for cells make the vessel," for the sake of the contrast to the *chariot* and the *upper chamber* of God. This departure from the usual arrangement has given occasion to the translation "he makes his angels winds and his servants flames of fire,"—a translation, however, to be set aside for the following reasons: we have here to do only with the visible glory of God in connection with Gen. i., which throughout is occupied only with the material creation; we are here specially engaged with the work of the second day, to which the whole of the second half of ver. 2–5 refers; material servants alone are suitable in connection with material *garments*, *fortress*, and *chariot*; and, finally, the parallel passages are against it, Ps. cv. 32, cxlviii. 8, "(praise the Lord) fire and hail, snow and smoke, stormy wind who obey his word." The citation, Heb. i. 7, cannot lead to this false translation. Even according to our view the passage serves the object of the author. For it is a degradation of the messengers of God in a strict sense, those who by pre-eminence are so named, that the mere powers of nature should be associated with them and be called by their names,—the more so as an indirect reference to angels is clear from the relation to Ps. ciii. 20. The maxim, "known from company" applies even here. He who has

such companions can in no wise be placed on a level with the Lord of glory. Even in ver. 5 we still find ourselves within the range of the second day. It was not till after the work of that day was ended that the earth had a separate existence. What is here said of the *earth* corresponds to what was said of the *heaven* in the first clause of ver. 3. As the *upper* part of the fabric of the world stands firm, though it has only water instead of beams, so is it with the *lower*, the earth is held as firm by the omnipotence of God, without a foundation, as if it had one; he has given to the earth, which is propped up by nothing, a firm existence, like a building which rests on a solid foundation. Ps. xxiv. 2 is not to be compared; for the discourse there is of the earth in a limited sense, of the division of land and water; but Job xxvi. 7, "he hangs the earth upon nothing;" comp. ver. 8 there, "he binds together the water in his thick clouds, and the cloud is not rent under them," with ver. 3 here, and also Job xxxviii. 4–6.

Ver. 6–18.—Ver. 6. *The flood thou coveredst above like to a garment, the waters stand upon the mountains.* Ver. 7. *Before thy rebuke they flee, before the voice of thy thunder they haste away.* Ver. 8. *They go up to the mountains, down to the valleys, to the place which thou hast founded for them.* Ver. 9. *A boundary thou didst set, they pass it not, they turn not again to cover the earth.*—Ver. 10. *He sends fountains in the valleys, they flow between the mountains.* Ver. 11. *All the beasts of the field drink them, the wild asses quench their thirst.* Ver. 12. *Over them dwell the birds of heaven, from the midst of the boughs they let their voices be heard.*—Ver. 13. *He watereth the hills out of his upper chambers, of the fruit of thy works the earth is satisfied.* Ver. 14. *He causes the grass to grow for the cattle and corn for the cultivation of man, to bring forth bread out of the earth.* Ver. 15. *And wine gladdens the heart of man to make his face to shine with oil, and bread strengthens man's heart.* Ver. 16. *The trees of the Lord are saturated, the cedars of Lebanon which he has planted.* Ver. 17. *Where the birds build their nests, the stork he dwells on the cypresses.*—Ver. 18. *The high hills are for the chamois, the rocks a refuge for the jerboas.*—The work of the third day, the removal of the water from the earth, is painted by

the Psalmist in ver. 6-9 at great length, and with evident delight, because he sees in it an *allegory*, the removal from the land of the Lord of the floods of the heathen by which it had been overspread; comp. on the sea as the standing emblem of the heathen world, at Ps. xciii.—The suffix in כִּסִּיתָ֣ו, ver. 6, refers to the flood: *the flood like a garment thou didst cover it*, over the earth. It will not do to refer it to the *earth*, for אֶרֶץ does not occur in the preceding verses, and is *everywhere* feminine except in a few cases where it stands for the *inhabitants* of the earth. The future in the second half and in the following clauses is to be explained from the lively realization of the past. The *mountains* appear here, (as the work of the second day begins), as already *in existence*, and only covered by the floods, as they were on a later occasion by the deluge (Gen. vii. 19, 20), by which the earth was brought back to its original condition.—The expression "the waters shall assemble in one place," Gen. i. 9, appears in ver. 7 as a *rebuke* of God, because God is the enemy of disorder, and because the water stood in an attitude of hostility to the realization of his purpose to manifest his glory on the earth. If we view the water as symbolical of heathen power hindering the realization of the purpose of God to bestow salvation on his people, the rebuke appears as still more suitable, compare Matth. viii. 26. The *thunder* is called the word of God, because it is just as terrible as his word is. On חָפַז, *to hasten for fear*, at Ps. xxxi. 22.—The clause, "they (the waters) go up to the mountains, down to the valleys, to the place (till they finally got to it) which thou hast founded for them," ver. 8, contains a graphic description of the effect of the divine rebuke and thunder: thrown into a state of tumultuous excitement the waters quickly again ascend the mountains, their high abode, from which the rebuke of God had brought them down, but unable to keep themselves there they go down to the valleys, until they find themselves in their proper situation, and enter into the place where God designs them to be,—a striking picture of the circumstances which occur when God designs to deliver his church from the power of its enemies. Even then the floods do not retire at once softly and quietly. They make repeatedly the attempt again to ascend the mountains; after that at least to obtain possession of the valleys; but at last they are compelled to be off entirely. The common translation is: up go the mountains,

down go the valleys. But in this case the Neptunian origin of the mountains and valleys would be really indicated as the immediate consequence of the separation of the fluid from the dry; for a mode of expression as suited to the appearance which most adopt, can scarcely be extracted from the words: they came by and by however high or low in appearance. Against this interpretation we have Ps. cvii. 26, "they go up to heaven, down to the valleys," whose שמים and תהומות are accusatives; the unquestionable reference of the second half of our verse to the waters, according to the fundamental passage in Gen. i. 9, "let the waters under heaven be assembled in one place;" and the circumstance that in ver. 9 the water is the subject as it must also be in ver. 8.. It is not possible that the language here can refer to the origin of the mountains, as according to ver. 6, they were already in existence. They existed also according to Gen. i., before the work of the sixth day. To the third day belonged only the *appearing* of the dry land, not its *formation;* the work of that day consisted only in this, that, as at the deluge, the waters retired from the earth, "the dry land *appeared.*" The יסד stands here as in ver. 5, Ps. cii. 25, in the sense of *to found:* God, as the master-builder of the world, *founded* the sea (as he did heaven and earth), as the place of habitation for the waters and for the innumerable creatures in them, ver. 25. Even this *founding* suits better for the sea than it does for the state of the hills and the valleys.—On ver. 9, comp. Job. xxxviii. 8–11. The exception of the *flood* cannot break the *rule;* and comes into notice here, as according to Gen. ix. 11, it cannot be repeated, all the less on this account, as the Psalmist is speaking from the present of the future. Berleb.: "But if God had not set such boundaries, the earth would long ago have overwhelmed the church. Wherefore may the rebuke of thy spirit always scatter it more and more!"—To the description of the negative act there is here appended the positive one: in the exercise of his loving regard for his living creatures, God *waters* the *dry* land, as a type of his tender care over his church delivered from the power of its enemies. The creation of the vegetable world for the nourishment of men and beasts belongs, even in Gen. i. 11, 12, still to the work of the third day; only, however, as is obvious from ch. ii. 5, as regards its *germ.* Here we have brought forward what forms the condition of the *development* of this germ,

and at all times the foundation of all vegetation on the earth. We have for the first time, in ver. 10-12, the watering of the *ground*. —That the נחל, a *brook*, next a *valley*, *through which a brook flows*, stands in ver. 10 in the latter sense, is evident from ver. 13, where the *mountains*, which receive moisture from the *upper* waters, form the opposite of the valleys here spoken of. The fountains hence comprehend the *brooks* formed by them: as in Joel iv. 18, "and a *fountain* shall proceed from the house of the Lord, and water the valley of Acacias"—a passage much more closely connected in reality with ours than can well be made to appear. Even in "they go" the fountains form the subject.—The *beasts of the field*, ver. 11 (comp. on חיתו at Ps. l. 10) stand in opposition to *domestic* animals, the cattle of ver. 14. On "they *break* their thirst," comp. שבר, *corn*, because it breaks the hunger.[a]—The *birds of heaven* of ver. 12 are from Gen. i. 30; ii. 19, where in like manner the *birds of heaven* stand in opposition to the *beasts of the field*, with whom they have this in common, that no one on earth cares for them. He who takes under his care the beasts of the field and the birds of heaven, will much more take care of *his own people*, comp. Matth. vi. 26, which passage serves as a key to the one now before us.—In ver. 13–17 the Psalmist proceeds to take up the subject of the care of God for the nourishment of his creatures by *watering the dry land*. As this takes place in *lower* situations by means of *fountains*, from which the wild beasts drink, and beside which the birds of heaven rear their habitations, so does it in the upper regions by rain, which makes the grass to grow for cattle, and corn and wine for men, and which waters even the trees where the birds build their nests. How should such a God not open the fountains of salvation for his own people, and pour down upon the thirsty the rain of grace!—The משקה in ver. 13 corresponds to the ישקו in ver. 11: "he *gives drink even* to the mountains." This division of the watering occurs in Gen. xlix. 25, "with blessings of the heaven above, with blessings of the deep which resteth below." The *mountains* are especially named because they are entirely assigned to the rain; comp. Deut. xi. 11, where it is said of Canaan: "a land of mountains and of vallies, it

[a] It is in favour of this explanation that the corn bears this name in a particular manner in Gen. xlii. ss., comp. especially xli. 57, xlii. 1.

drinketh in water of the rain of heaven," in opposition to *Egypt* which is watered by the Nile. *Out of his upper chambers*—comp. ver. 3. The *works of God* are the heavens or the upper chambers,[a] ver. 2, 3; (comp. ver. 24); and *the fruit* of these works is the *rain;* by this the earth is satisfied; richly watered with it.—In ver. 14 we have the *fruit* which the earth thus watered bears for cattle and men. Instead of "for the cultivation of men," many translate after Luther: "for the use of men;" but the עבדה signifies always *labour, service,* (in this sense ver. 23) never *use, need,* not even in Num. iii. 31, 36; the mere עשב is not enough—it belongs to *cattle* as food, Gen. i. 30, and needs an adjunct which corresponds to the "bearing seed" in Gen. i. 11, 29, and limits the expression to "*corn*"; finally, the fundamental passages, Gen. ii. 5, "*to labour* the ground," iii. 23, iv. 2, are in favour of the rendering "for the cultivation." The last words "to bring forth," for "that he may bring forth," gives the object of the shooting of the corn: God in this way prepares for man his chief means of support, bread. Allusion is made to Gen. i. 12, "And the earth *brought forth* grass bearing seed;" comp. Job. xxviii. 5, "the earth out of which goes forth bread."—In ver. 15 the importance of bread for men is brought prominently forward—it imparts strength to the weak—after mention had been made of *another* blessing, which by means of the watering is imparted to men, viz., wine. *And wine gladdens*—viz., in consequence of the watering from the upper chambers of God. It is designedly that man in both clauses is termed אנוש, *weak, frail, full of care,* comp. the reference at Ps. viii. The Psalmist hereby intimates why God has provided for him these means of cheerfulness and strength, how lovingly God has had regard for him in adopting these means to his necessities. The צהל is *to rejoice,* in Hiph., *to make to rejoice, to make joyful;* comp. Prov. xv. 13, "a joyful heart makes a good countenance," where also as here the article is poetically wanting. *With oil*—the oil of gladness, Ps. xlv. 7, xxiii. 5, with which they were wont to anoint themselves on festive occasions before meals. The brightening on such occasions did not come from the oil, with which they anointed themselves only as a *sign* of the joy, but in spite of the misuse made of it, from the wine the noble gift of God, which

[a] Ven.: "Allusion is manifestly made to these upper chambers constructed by God, ver. 3; and for this cause these are here called the works of God."

made the sign a truthful one. The translation commonly given is: so that it makes his face shining as if it were anointed with oil. But this assumes without any ground that the צהל here is equivalent to צהר, more particularly so, as this verb never occurs in Hiph in the sense of *to make to shine;* there is moreever the fact that it was not the *face* that was ever anointed, but the *head*, comp. Ps. xxiii. 5, Matth. vi. 17, "anoint thy *head*, and *wash* thy face." The small difference in the shade of meaning in צהל in the translation given above need occasion less difficulty, as the word was selected because of the reference of צהר to oil: the צהר does not cause the צהל but the wine (it is not the shining but the wine that brightens the face), Böttcher, Proben. p. 212, defends the translation of Luther: "and his face became beautiful with oil," according to which oil as the third chief product of Canaan is named between the bread and the wine, which however here as in other passages are united together as one noble pair, Ps. iv. 7, Gen. xiv. 18, xxvii. 28. Against this, however, there is the לְהַצְהִיל, according to which the words cannot possibly be construed as an independent clause; the contrast between the *gladness* and the *strength*, which alone justifies the renewed mention of the bread, is weakened; in the whole paragraph, ver. 10–17, mention is made only of what appeases hunger and thirst, with which oil has nothing to do. The phrase, "to strengthen man's heart," is from Gen. xviii. 5.—The words "they are satisfied," in ver. 16, refer back to "the earth is satisfied" in ver. 13: with the earth also the trees. The mountains of *God* are, in Ps. xxxvi. 6, the highest mountains, which proclaim in the loudest terms the creative power of God; the cedars of Lebanon are also, in Ps. lxxx. 10, called, as being the kings of the trees, *the cedars of God:* in the fundamental psssage, Num. xxiv. 6, "the spice trees which the Lord hath planted," are trees of particularly powerful growth, comp. Balaam, p. 145. According to this, "the trees of the Lord" here must also be those which, as, for example, the cedars of Lebanon, named in the second clause as individual specimens, loudly proclaim, by their being well supplied, the origin from which they have come: there is no reference whatever to any contrast between the trees here spoken of and such trees as have been planted by man.—Ver. 17 corresponds to ver. 12. The *rain* is not less beneficial to the birds than are the fountains of water. *Where,*—in the trees upon the mountains, according to ver. 12

and the second clause. The little birds and the stork, *i.e.*, birds great and small.—It has been already observed in the introduction that ver. 18 stands out of the connection, and is to be looked upon merely as a transition clause. The *hills, the high ones* I mean, stand instead of the *high hills*, in opposition to the hills generally, in ver. 13, and in parallel to the high *rocks*. The מחסה is not to be supplied in the first clause, but serves only to show the force of the ל in that clause. On the second clause, comp. Prov. xxx. 26. Shall not he who points out to the wild goat and the spring mouse their little abode, and leaves none of his creatures uncared for, undertake for his *chosen ones?* shall he leave any of them to perish? No; wherever they turn thoughout the wide world, they everywhere see intimations of their own salvation. The birds on the trees, the wild beasts at the fountains, the mouse on the hills, every thing cries out to them: be ye comforted, and of good courage, for are you not better than many sparrows? At the time when this Psalm was composed, it was worse with Israel than with the goat and the spring-mouse (comp. Matth. viii. 20), they had no place of refuge, no spot upon the wide earth which they could call their own; comp. with the middle verse here the 23d verse of Ps. cv.

Ver. 19–30.—Ver. 19. *He made the moon to divide the time, the sun knows its going down.* Ver. 20. *Thou makest darkness and it is night, in it all the beasts of the forest are astir.* Ver. 21. *The lions roaring after their prey, and to seek from God their food.* Ver. 22. *The sun rises, they gather themselves together and lie down in their dens.* Ver. 23. *Man goes forth to his work and his labour till the evening.*—Ver. 24. *How manifold are thy works, O Lord, in wisdom hast thou made them all, the earth is full of thy goodnesses.* Ver. 25. *Here the sea, great and wide, where are moving things without number, beasts, small with great.* Ver. 26. *There go the ships, the leviathan whom thou hast formed that he should sport there.*—Ver. 27. *All this waits upon thee, that thou givest their meat in their time.* Ver. 28. *Thou givest them, they gather up, thou openest thy hand, they are satisfied with good.* Ver. 29. *Thou hidest thy countenance, they are terrified, thou collectest their breath, they fade and turn back to their dust.* Ver. 30. *Thou sendest out thy breath, they are created, thou renewest the appearance of the earth.*—First, ver.

19-23, by the distinction made by the sun and moon, the work of the fourth day, Gen. i. 14, ss., between day and night, God makes provision for the different portions of his creatures, the beasts of the forest to whom the night belongs, and man whose is the day. Shall he who bears such loving care for the lions forget Sion?—For *appointed times*, ver. 19, (compare the מועד, *point of time*, Ps. lxxv. 2, cii. 13), that there may be *such*, that these may be marked by it, namely and particularly, the difference between day and night. It is clear from the second parallel clause, and from the expansion in ver. 20-23, that this fundamental difference on which the others depend is here also brought particularly into view; comp. "to divide between day and night," which in Gen. i. 14 precedes, "and to serve for signs and for seasons," and "to divide the light and between the darkness" of ver. 18. The *moon* is named before the sun as the proper time-divider, as the Hebrews began the day with the evening, and also because the Psalmist wished to conclude with the picture of the day. *The sun knows its going down*, so that it never remains in the heaven beyond its time, and thus destroys the division of time, and robs a part of God's creatures of their maintenance. מבוא is not the *act* of coming but the *place*, Ez. xxvi. 10, "the approaches to a conquered city;" מבוא שמש, the place where the sun goes down, Ps. l. 1, cxiii. 3, in opposition to מזרח שמש, the place where he rises.—The two abbreviated futures in ver. 20, are properly, "make thou darkness and it shall be as night," instead of, when thou makest darkness and it is. The *condition* in animated discourse is expressed as if it were a *wish*.—In ver. 21 the translation is not "the lions roar," but "the lions (rise) roaring after their prey and to seek," compare Amos viii. 12, "they run to and fro to seek the word of the Lord." *From God* who is their proper provider, and who therefore prepares for them the night in which they may seek their nourishment, compare Job xxxviii. 39. If God thus cares for the wild beasts of the forest, and provides for the hungry lions their food, shall he permit his chosen people to perish in sorrow and misery? The roar of the lion should ring in their ears, 'O ye of little faith."—*They are assembled*, ver. 12 from the dispersion spoken of in ver. 20, 21. God causes for the sake of *men* the day to follow the night, in which they may go forth to their labour, and work for their maintenance; he will,

therefore, on behalf of those who can pray to him "our Father," cause the day of salvation to follow the night of trouble during the whole course of history, and in the most glorious manner at the end of time. Berleb.: "When Jesus Christ went into a state of humiliation, then roaring lions, bears, and foxes, came out of their holes, and fell fiercely upon him, Acts iv. 27. And a similar lot still befals his church, even at this time, and did so throughout the long night under Antichrist. But on the morning of the seventh day the sun shall rise in his strength, and shall shine throughout the whole day, when no wicked beast shall dare to look out."—In ver. 24-26, after an introduction which directs attention afresh to the *point of view* from which the whole description is to be looked at, to the sun namely and to the moon as the *highest* point in the creation, where the omnipotent love of God is made manifest, there follows the sea as the *deepest*. In the Mosaic history of the creation the formation of the fishes and the birds belongs to the fifth day. As the *business* of the Psalmist is not to *treat* of the *formation* of the creatures, but only of the *care* which God takes of them, and as he had already handled the care taken of birds, there hence suitably follows the preparation of the sea for marine animals, and also for man, who by means of it obtains the advantages arising from navigation and trade.—The מה רבו in ver. 24, is not "how great,"—that is גדלו מה, Psalm xcii. 6—but "how many are," compare Psalm. iii. 2. The קנין is not a creature, but as always a possession, compare Ps. cv. 31. Throughout the whole Psalm the discourse is not of the riches of the *creatures* of God, but of the riches of his arrangements on their behalf, so that each of them finds his sphere of existence and his means of support: thy possessions—in which thou investest thy creatures, and by means of which thou maintainest them. Even by the *works* of God we are not to understand his creatures, but the arrangements made for them, not the marine animals, for example, but the sea itself. In consequence of the numerous works of God, which are made according to the necessities of his various creatures, the earth is full of his good things by which he supports his creatures. How should Sion alone starve in the midst of all these riches of her God? How should he who cares for the beasts of the sea, great and small, not care for her? According to Köster, our verse should

come after ver, 26, and be appended to ver. 27 : the כלם there manifestly points back to our verse. We are, however, by this proposal strikingly reminded of the fable of the acorn. Ver. 24 and 27 do not at all suit well together, as the language of the former of these verses does not apply to creatures.—*This the sea*, ver. 25 (the Psalmist takes this case as an instance), is equivalent to, here as one of the many works which thou hast made in wisdom, the sea. *Wide, both hands*, for *on both hands, both sides*. The רמש, of sea-animals, used only here, is taken from הרמשת, Gen. i. 21, comp. Ps. lxix. 34, "Assuredly the species of the sea-animals are of the most varied kinds, the smallest and the largest are among them."—The mention of the *ships* in ver. 26 points to what the sea does for man (comp. Gen. xlix. 13) ; while the leviathan, presenting the appearance of a ship, represents the *animals*. The masculine ילתן is to be explained from the personification of the ships as active wanderers (comp. Gen. iv. 7), as we speak of a quick sailor. At the second clause, we are not to comp. Job xl. 29, but ver. 20 : " And all beasts of the field sport there." The translation, " whom thou hast made to sport *with him*," suits well for Jarchi, but not for our day. According to the design of the Psalmist, notice is taken only of what the sea does for the leviathan, who feels himself when there to be in his element.—In ver. 27–30, all creatures obtain from God their food in their seasons ; he will, therefore, give also to his starving church her daily food ; they perish and begin life again according to his will ; he renews, after it has been destroyed, the appearance of the earth, his church, therefore, which even now experiences his *death-bringing* power, shall also in due season experience his life-giving power, and the comforting word, " Behold I make all things new."—The suffix in כלם ver. 27 most interpreters would refer only to the sea-animals. But the expression " Thou renewest the face of the earth," in ver. 30, alone is sufficient to refute this. It applies to every thing named in the preceding verses, including also men ; comp. ver. 14, 15, 23 ; and also 26, where " there go the ships" refers also to men. The conjunct reference to men appears particularly clear, from the fundamental and parallel passages in the following verses, comp. particularly Job xxxiv. 14, 15. Had the strophes been originally separated by an outward mark, the temptation to apply the כלם

only to what immediately precedes would never have existed. Ps. cxlvii. 9 is really parallel to our verse. On "at their time" comp. Ps. i. 3, cxlv. 15.—In ver. 28, the very rare word לקט, not *to gather together generally*, but *to gather up, to pick up from the earth*, shows that there lies at bottom a reference to the *manna*, in connecion with which this is the word of constant occurrence, Ex. xvi. 4, 5, 16. This reference intimates that *all* nourishment is *bread from heaven*, Ps. cv. 40, in accordance with Deut. viii. 3, according to which the Lord gave manna to the Israelites, for the purpose of impressing upon them this great truth.—In ver. 29, the hiding of the countenance denotes the withdrawal of God's compassionate care. On "they are terrified," comp. at Ps. xc. 7. On "Thou assemblest their breath or spirit," (not thou takest away) comp. Job xxxiv. 14, 15, "If he would regard him, he would gather to him his spirit and breath: all flesh would die at once, and man would return to the dust." According to the doctrine of Scripture, all life, not only what is immaterial and spiritual, but also what is physical, is from God, the fountain of life, the God of the spirits of all flesh, Num. xvi. 22, xxvii. 16, Heb. xii. 9; comp. Gen. i. 2, ii. 7, Ec. xii. 7, "The spirit returns to God who gave it." The abbreviated future is to be explained, as in ver. 20, properly *gather in* instead of *if thou gather in*. The וגרעך alludes to the mighty confirmation given to the position here expressed by the deluge, comp. Gen. vii. 21, 22: "All flesh died that moved upon the earth, bird, and cattle, and wild beast, . . . and every man: every thing in whose nostrils was the breath of life . . . died." The expression "return to their dust" depends on Gen. iii. 19, "until thou return to the dust from which thou wast taken, for dust thou art, and unto dust shalt thou return,"—*They are created*, they as the whole, or the whole classes of creatures, are again called into being, comp. the ברא in Ps. cii. 18. The *face of the earth* (from Gen. vii. 4, "I destroy every living thing from the face of the earth," 6, 7) is *renewed*, viz. by this reproduction of living creatures, but, at the same time, by the removal of every other desolation. The period after the flood furnishes us with the most visible picture of such a *renewal*, as it exists after every ruinous catastrophe, and in a certain measure each spring. These renewals of the *earth* furnish a type and a pledge of the renewal

of the condition of the church, until the final perfect *regeneration*, Matth. xix. 28.

Ver. 31–34.—Ver. 31. *Let the glory of the Lord be eternal, let the Lord rejoice in his works.* Ver. 32. *He looks upon the earth, it shakes; he touches the mountains, they smoke.* Ver. 33. *I will sing to the Lord so long as I live, I will play to my God while I have a being.* Ver. 34. *May my meditation be acceptable to him, I will rejoice in the Lord.*—The "may it be, may he rejoice," in ver. 31, has at bottom, "it shall be; he shall rejoice," and hence merely intimates that this being and rejoicing are agreeable to the wishes of the Psalmist: the Lord is and shall be eternally glorified by his works, and shall have cause to rejoice, as it is said he did after creation was finished, Gen. i. 31, to which allusion is here made, "And God saw every thing which he had made, and behold it was very good." The language does not apply to the *acknowledgment* of the glory of God, but to the real existence of that glory. The works of God, ver. 13, 24, Ps. xix. 1, can only be what had been praised in the preceding verses; and therefore are not animals and men, but every thing which he has created for them, and by which he manifests his care over them, the heavens, the sun, the moon, the earth, the fountains, &c. As the nature of God is eternally glorified by these works, so also—this is the concealed back-ground, this the conclusion of faith—shall it be by his work of *deliverance*.—In ver. 32 we have the basis of the confidence expressed in ver. 31, the *omnipotence* of God, according to which he can easily prevent every deterioration of the creature from its original condition. Should the earth presume to depart from the course of its destination, a single look of the Almighty is sufficient to bring it back to trembling obedience; should the mountains refuse to render their service, the Lord requires only to touch them, in order to humble them. And if the earth and the mountains cannot frustrate the design which the Lord had in creating them, the world and its kingdoms (comp. on the mountains as symbols of kingdoms, Ps. lxviii. 15) cannot frustrate the purposes of redemption. *The mountains smoke*,—with fire, the wrath of the Lord which kindles their foundation; Deut. xxxii. 22, Ex. xix. 18, "And Sinai *smoked* wholly because the Lord descended upon it in fire . . . . . and the whole mountains shook exceedingly," (the first clause)

—In the second pair of verses in the conclusion, we have as growing out of the eternity of the glory of God in his works, the determination of the Psalmist, and of the church in whose name he speaks, to praise the Lord, and by this praise to conquer "all care, anguish, and pain." The expression, "in my life," in ver. 33, is not "my whole life through," (comp. at Ps. lxiii. 4), but in harmony with the second clause, "so long as have I yet to live, ere death shut my lips for his praise, the night cometh when I can no more praise," comp. Ps. vi. 5, lxxxviii. 10, cxv. 17, 18, xxx. 9.—'My meditation shall be acceptable to him," ver. 34, according to the connection, the parallel and Ps. cv. 2, is equivalent to, "I will meditate on his wonders to his pleasure," "I will bring to him the acceptable offering of my meditation." *I will rejoice in the Lord*—he rejoices in his works, ver. 31, and we will rejoice in them because of their glory.

Ver. 35. *Sinners shall end from the earth, and the wicked shall no more be. Praise my soul the Lord, Halleluja!* The fundamental passage is Num. xiv. 35: "the whole company of the wicked who are assembled against me shall come to an end in the wilderness and shall die there." The fate which in a former age befel the wicked company of the Israelites in the wilderness, shall be repeated upon the *heathen* company which had assembled against the Lord and his church: this hope the Psalmist entertains from having considered the glory of God in his works. The words, "sinners shall end," &c., here form the counterpart to "the sons of thy servants shall abide," &c., at the close of Ps. cii.

PSALM CV.

In ver. 1–7, we have the theme: the judgments and the wonders of God in the *past* as the foundation of joyful hope for the *future*. Next the development: God always remembers the promise of the permanent possession of Canaan which he imparted to the fathers of the nation, ver. 8–12. Faithful to this promise he protected the fathers in every danger, ver. 13–15. It was under his wonderful guidance that Jacob the bearer of the promise came with his family to Egypt, ver. 16–23, and was afterwards *delivered*

from it by great wonders and signs, ver. 24–28, which are represented in detail, ver. 29–38: the destruction of the useful fishes, and the introduction of the destructive frogs, flies, and gnats, ver. 29–31; hail, ruinous to the trees, and locusts to the plants, ver. 32–35; and, finally, the death of the first-born, ver. 36–38. After that, we have the wonders of God in the wilderness, ver. 39-42, and the introduction of the Israelites into Canaan, ver. 43–45.

The beginning and the conclusion consist each of a strophe of seven verses, divided by the four and the three. Of the remaining thirty-one verses, the twenty-third is not counted, "and Israel came to Egypt, and Jacob sojourned as a pilgrim in the land of Ham." This verse, which forms the point of connection between the past and the present, stands out of the formal arrangement. There remain, therefore, three decades. These are grouped on both sides round ver. 23, as the middle point. The five forms both times the beginning, ver. 8–12, and ver. 24–28, the ten is both times, ver. 13–22, and ver. 29–38, divided by a three, four, three, or by a three and a seven, which, again, as in the introduction and conclusion, falls into a four and three.

It is announced in the Introduction that the object of the Psalm is to awaken the Church to joyful hope for the future, by the consideration of the wonders of God in the past. This general object assumes a specific form in the development. The author does not introduce the whole series of the wonders of God, but concludes as soon as Israel has obtained possession of Canaan. Out of the whole storehouse of the promises of God vouchsafed to the patriarchs, only one is brought prominently forward, namely, that concerning the possession of Canaan. Every thing revolves round this. The wonders and the judgments have all, for their ultimate design, the fulfilment of this promise. The matter of the abode in Egypt, however, is considered by the author as of particular importance in treating of the fulfilment of these promises. He depicts, particularly, how this abode was brought about. He renders prominent, with most manifest design, the clause, "Israel came to Egypt," as the most significant point of the whole Psalm; he speaks at great length of the wonders and signs by which Israel was delivered from Egypt. He takes very little notice of what was done subsequent to this, throwing it

merely into the conclusion, and treating of it very briefly and superficially.

All these facts are sufficiently explained as soon as we assume the composition of the Psalm to belong to the period of the Babylonish captivity,—a period which extends its sway even to the cvi. Psalm, with which ours is inseparably connected. At this period, the promise of Canaan given to the fathers, and the doings of God in early times, in fulfilment of that promise, must have exercised a powerful influence on the spirits of men. This faithfulness of God to his promises, which brought Israel out of Egypt, in order to bestow upon him, at the first, his inheritance, must also deliver him out of the Egypt of the present Babylon, in order to restore to him his lost inheritance.

A more perfect connection with Ps. civ. is externally indicated by the circumstance, that, as there, so here also, the Hallelujah, which unquestionably has its original position in these Psalms, forms the conclusion. There are also individual points of contact in addition to the formal arrangement, the characteristic feature of which is, that both Psalms have a *middle verse*, here in ver. 2 comp. with civ. 34, in ver. 16 comp. with civ. 15. Both Psalms have for their common object to comfort sorely-afflicted Israel. The civ. Psalm draws the consolation from "meditating upon the wonders of God" *in nature*, our Psalm in *history*

The connection of the Psalm with the cvi., which, *beginning* and *ending* with the Hallelujah, embraces the two Hallelujahs of the preceding Psalms, is effected by the last verse, in which the ultimate design of Israel's possessing Canaan, appears as the obeying, on their part, the commandments of God. The following Psalm enters at length into a description of the position which Israel obtained, in order to fulfil this purpose. Ver. 23 here comes into contact, in particular expressions, with ver. 22 of Ps. cvi.

The historical character of our Psalm is common to it with Psalm lxxviii.; the design, however, is different.—The Psalmist there is occupied in endeavouring, by making use of the events of the Mosaic period, to lead the Israelites to repentance, but here to awaken them to faith in the paternal guidance of God. Our Psalm leans upon that one in particular expressions. It would form the subject of an interesting treatise to point out the prin-

ciples of composition adopted in Scripture. The practice of drawing inferences from a few principles or facts, in the way of similarity and consequence, prevails to a great extent.

Psalms such as ours and the 78th show very manifestly how firmly the facts of sacred history were rooted in the Israelitish mind, and how absurd it is to institute any comparison between these facts and the myths or traditions of a heathen antiquity. The material here is unquestionably a given one, over which poetry has no power.

Ver. 1–7.—Ver. 1. *Praise the Lord, call on his name, make known among the nations his mighty deeds.* Ver. 2. *Sing to him, play to him, meditate upon all his wonderful works.* Ver. 3. *Glory in his holy name, let the heart of them rejoice who seek the Lord.* Ver. 4. *Enquire at the Lord and his might, seek his face continually.* Ver. 5. *Think upon his wonderful works which he has done, his wonders and the judgments of his mouth.* Ver. 6. *Ye the seed of Abraham his servant, the sons of Jacob his chosen one.* Ver. 7. *He is the Lord our God, his judgments are over all the earth.*—*Praise the Lord*, ver. 4; comp. Ps. xxxiii. 2. *Call on his name*,—on him according to his historically manifested glory (comp. at Ps. lxiii. 4), in the first instance praising and thanking after the example of Abraham, who, as often as God acquired for himself a name in guiding him, *called* in solemn worship upon the name of the Lord, Gen. xii. 8, xiii. 4. On "Make known among the nations," comp. Ps. xviii. 49, lvii. 9. The *mighty deeds of God* are those out of which his name grows. On "glory ye," ver. 3, comp. Ps. xxxiv. 2, "My soul shall glory in the Lord." *His holy name*:—this he has *acquired* by his glorious deeds on behalf of Israel, for whose *future salvation* it affords security, and, therefore, it forms for Israel the object of glorying. The world glories in its horses and chariots against the church of God lying in the dust; but the church has something *better* in which to glory. *Let the heart rejoice* in midst of deepest trouble; comp. Ps. xxxiii. 21, "For our heart rejoices in him because we trust in his holy name." *To seek the Lord* is equivalent to "to trust in him," Ps. lxix. 6.—*Enquire at the Lord and his might*, ver. 4, stirred up by the glorious manifestations of these in times past, whether they will not help you even now; comp. Ps. xxxiv. 4, lxxviii. 34, 2 Chron. xvi. 12, and, in

reference to *his might* at Ps. lxiii. 2, lxxviii. 34. *To seek the face of the Lord* is to be a candidate for his favour, encouraged by the manifestations of this in ancient times; comp. at Ps. xxiv. 6, xxvii. 8.—*Think upon*, ver. 5,—and forget not, Ps. lxxviii. 11.—*His wonderful works which he has done*, Ps. lxxviii. 4, 12. *The judgments of his mouth*,—the *deeds* of the Lord are neither more nor less than so many matter-of-fact discourses, judicial decisions, such, for example, as the wonders of God in Egypt, which were exactly so many judicial decisions of God in the case of Israel against the Egyptians, or of the church of God against the world; comp. Ps. cxix. 13, where "all the judgments of thy mouth" means the *commandments* of God.—Ver. 6 grounds the exhortation in ver. 5. Those addressed had good reason to remember these deeds of God, for they are the seed of Abraham, his servant, = his client (not his servants, comp. ver. 42), and, therefore, the legitimate heirs of his promises; the early deeds are for them pledges of a similar deliverance.—The Jehovah in ver. 7 contains the sense of the true Godhead in it, and guarantees infinite power to judge and to help. The expression "His judgments are over the whole earth, or extend over the whole earth," has its *basis* in those judgments of God in the past which are more particularly described in the following verses, and its face towards the future, for the God of Israel, as surely as he is Jehovah, will anew manifest himself as the Judge of the earth, Ps. xciv. 2.

Ver. 8–12.—Ver. 8. *He remembers eternally his covenant, the word which he ordains for a thousand generations.* Ver. 9. *Which he concluded with Abraham and his oath to Isaac.* Ver. 10. *And which he appointed to Jacob for a law, to Israel for an eternal covenant.* Ver. 11. *Saying, to thee will I give the land of Canaan for your inheritance.* Ver. 12. *When they were small in number, very few and strangers in it.*—The preterite stands in ver. 8 on account of the verification in past times of the general position taken up in the following verses. Instead of the *covenant* in the second clause, we have the *word* for the purpose of intimating that the covenant comes into notice here on account of its *promises*. The word according to what follows is the declaration of the favour or grace of God, on behalf of the chosen family, and especially of the possession of Canaan. It is manifest from ver. 42 that the דבר is still governed by

זכר, and that therefore the relative must be supplied: "for he remembered his holy word with Abraham his servant." *Which he ordained,*—set forth like an inviolable law, ver. 10. *To* or *for* a *thousand,* innumerable *generations*—a verbal allusion to Deut. vii. 9, "who keepeth covenant and mercy for those who love him to a thousand generations," comp. Ex. xx. 6.—In ver 9–11, the covenant and the word are more particularly described; in reference to those who first *received* them in ver. 9 and 10 (the language depending on Deut. xxix. 12, "as he spoke to thee, and as he swore to thy fathers, Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob," comp. Deut. iv. 31), and in reference to their *contents* in ver. 11. It is evident from ver. 42, that we must in ver. 9 expound: he remembers the word which *he concluded with Abraham.* The כרת is also in Hagg. ii. 5 connected with the דבר instead of the otherwise common ברית, "the word which I concluded with you when I led you out of Egypt," and this connection *here* ought to occasion the less difficulty, as the word according to the parallel is the word of the *covenant.* "He remembers," must also be supplied at the second clause. Allusion is made to Gen. xxvi. 3, where God says to Isaac, "Sojourn in the land, and I shall be with thee and bless thee, for to thee and to thy seed I will give all these lands, and fulfil the oath which I swore to Abraham thy father."—On העמיד with the accusative of the thing, and the dative of the person, ver. 10, compare at Ps. xxx. 7. The expression, "And he appointed to him," is equivalent to "and he remembered the oath which he appointed." On לחק Ven.: "that it might retain perennial vigour like some solemnly proclaimed decree." Allusion is made to Gen. xxviii. 13, where God says to Jacob, "I am the God of Abraham thy father, and the God of Isaac, the land whereon thou liest I will give it to thee and to thy seed," and to Gen. xxxv. 12, where he says to Israel, "the land which I have given to Abraham, I will give to thee, and to thy seed after thee will I give this land."—To thee will I give," ver. 11,—so said God to each individual of the above-mentioned three, hence in the second clause "for *your* inheritance," compare at Ps. lxxvii. 55. The following verse shews that we are not to regard the plural as having any reference to the *descendants.*—*When they were small in number,*—a "little flock," who could do nothing themselves to bring about the fulfilment of the pro-

mise, who might easily have perished without leaving a trace behind them, had not the mighty arm of him who had made the promises been wielded over them. Thus was it also again at the time of the composition of this Psalm: in 1 Chron. xvi. 19, when *ye* were in your fathers, this allusion is directly applied to present circumstances. Allusion is made to Gen. xxxiv. 30: "And I am *few in number*, and they may easily gather themselves together against me, and slay me and I shall be destroyed, I and my house." The במעט is properly *like a few*, comp. Is. i. 9. The ideal magnitude to which the real here corresponds is the *few*, not the *many*. What resembles the original idea of fewness must be few *indeed*.

Ver. 13–22.—Ver. 13. *And they went from nation to nation, from one kingdom to another nation.* Ver. 14. *He permitted no man to do them harm, and punished kings for their sakes.* Ver. 15. "*Touch not mine anointed, and do my prophets no harm.*" Ver. 16. *And he called hunger upon the land, he broke every staff of bread.* Ver. 17. *He sent before them a man, Joseph was sold for a servant.* Ver. 18. *They tormented his feet with fetters, his soul came into iron.* Ver. 19. *Until the time when his word came, the word of the Lord cleared him.*—Ver. 20. *Then the king sent and released him, the ruler of the nations, and set him free.* Ver. 21. *He made him Lord over his house, and ruler over all his possessions.* Ver. 22. *That he might bind his princes at his pleasure, and teach his ancients wisdom.*—Ver. 23. *And Israel came to Egypt, and Jacob sojourned as a pilgrim in the land of Ham.*—In ver. 13–15 we have the providence of God watching over those who first received the promises, by which was declared the possibility of the fulfilment of these promises. *They wandered from nation to nation*, ver. 13, and therefore from danger to danger; the waters of the heathen world would have overflowed them, had it not been for the protecting hand of God. Everywhere, in Canaan itself, among the Philistines, among the Egyptians, it was only this hand which turned away all danger from the patriarchs. *He punished kings for their sakes*,—Pharaoh, in Gen. xii. 17, and Abimelech in xx. 3, ss., to whose case chiefly the allusion is made, as is evident from the reproof quoted in ver 15. On "touch not," ver. 15, comp. Gen. xxvi. 2, where Abimelech says of Isaac,

"whoever *touches* this man and his wife shall be put to death," com. ver. 29. The *anointing* is in the Scriptures both of the Old and New Testament the standing *symbol* and *type* (the latter, for example, in 1 Kings xix. 16, Is. lxi. 1) of the communication of the gifts of the Spirit; see the proof of this in the Christol. P. ii. p. 444 ss. *Mine anointed*,—therefore, the vessels of my Spirit (comp. Gen. xli. 38, where Pharaoh says of Joseph, "Can we find such a one as this is, a man in whom the Spirit of God is?"), the bearers of my revelation. The parallel and the whole connection shew that the discourse here is of the *prophetic* gifts of the Spirit. The translation "my confidants," as "a vague common honorary title," is a piece of nonsense. "Do my prophets no harm" depends upon Gen. xx. 7, where God says to Abimelech, "And now give the man back his wife, for he is a prophet, and if he pray for thee thou shalt live." The נביא means properly the "God-spoken:" the nature of prophecy is a divine address. The language already used in ver. 11 refers to this; Gen. xv. relates how Abraham received such addresses in both the forms peculiar to prophecy, *vision* and *dream*. Isaac had a prophetical dream at Beersheba; Jacob at Bethel. The latter as a prophet saw at Mahanaim the angels of God, and wrestled with the Lord at Jabbok. Prophetic revelations form the basis of the *blessing* of Isaac and Jacob. Our passage is of importance as a proof that נביא does not denote, as is commonly said, an *orator* of God, but that the form maintains its usual passive sense. The prophets were not "inspired orators," except in the isolated case of the above-mentioned two blessing addresses, which, according to ver. 11, do not here come specially into view, but *God-bespoken* men, recipients of divine communications, and in so far vessels of honour, which the world durst not touch with impunity.—In ver. 16–23 we have the introduction into Egypt of the bearers of the promise, in circumstances which manifestly shewed that the hand of God was there in operation, and that the promise of God was not by this broken, but on the contrary, that its fulfilment was by this means brought about. —The *land* in ver. 16 is the land in which the patriarchs sojourned, and which had been promised to them, ver. 11, 12. The *staff* comes into notice as the support, comp. Ps. civ. 15, "And bread supporteth man's heart." The words are from Levit. xxvi. 26, "if I break for you the staff of bread," on which Is. iii. 1 depends.

—At the first clause of ver. 17, comp. Gen. xlv. 5, where Joseph says to his brethren, "And now be not distressed because you sold me, for God sent me before you for a support," l. 20. On the second clause, Gen. xxxvii. 34. The exceeding copiousness of detail with which the Psalmist speaks of *Joseph* gives rise to the idea that he had before his mind a counterpart to Joseph in the Egypt of the present time. We might suppose that he alluded to the ten tribes, who are spoken of by the name of Joseph in Ps. lxxx. 1, but the description will not suit this Joseph, for he had nothing in common with the old one except the *single* circumstance that he was taken to Egypt before Judah. It is not told in history that he prepared for him a city there. On the other hand, an astonishing light breaks in upon the picture, if we look at the second Joseph in *Daniel*. The striking similarity between Joseph and Daniel is clear as day. Daniel had been led away into captivity in the fourth year of Jehoiakim; an interpretation of a dream procured for him an influential position, which put it within his reach to promote the welfare of his captive brethren, whose pride he was according to the testimony of Ezekiel, and finally, to effect their deliverance.—That Joseph was *fettered* in prison, ver. 18, is expressly said in Gen. xl. 3; comp. also xxxix. 20, 22, according to which all the prisoners in the king's prison were bound. Still his fetters were assuredly light, after he obtained the favour of the keeper of the prison, xxxix. 21, ss. The miserable condition of Joseph as a prisoner, and his subsequent deliverance, are described at such length, because the Psalmist sees in him a picture of "those bound in misery and iron," Ps. cvii. 10. The Keri, *his foot*, depends on the miserable ground that the *fetter* is singular. That the ברזל is the accusative is clear from the simple ground that it is masculine. The whole person is denoted by the *soul*, (at Ps. ciii. 5), because the soul of the captive suffers still more than the body. Imprisonment is one of the most severe trials to the soul. Even to spiritual heroes, such as a Savonarola and St Cyran (Ste Beuve hist. de Port. royal, P. i.), the waters often go over the soul.—The *word* of Joseph (the suffix refers every where to Joseph in this connection) is that by which he interpreted to the

a It has been maintained without any reason, that אסר also signifies to make captive, to keep in custody any one not bound. Custody without bonds was not common.

royal servants their dreams in prison; comp. Gen. xli. 13, "And as he interpreted so it happened, me he restored to my place, and him he hanged," and also the 14th verse, "then Pharoah sent and called Joseph, and they took him out of the prison, and he shaved his beard and changed his clothes and came to Pharoah." As the verification of the interpretation of the dreams on the part of Joseph and his deliverance are connected together as cause and effect, no notice is taken of the interval of two years which elapsed between them, Gen. xli. i. The *word* of the Lord in the second clause is, according to ver. 11 and 42, the promise of the possession of Canaan, the accomplishment of which demanded the preceding residence in Egypt. The purifying of Joseph in the eyes of men, the establishment of his character, is attributed to the living and powerful word of God, because it happened on account of it. The words depend upon Ps. xviii. 30, "the word of the Lord (his promise) is purified:" the word of the Lord, because pure, purified; and it was the reference to that passage which led to the strange expression.—On ver. 21 comp. Gen. xli. 40, 41, and as the most exactly accordant fundamental passage, xlv. 8.—The figurative expression, *to bind*, in ver 21, was occasioned by the reference to "his soul came into iron," in ver. 18: the soul once bound now binds princes. That the expression is not to be taken in a literal sense, is evident not only from the parallel but also from the fundamental passages, in which no mention is any where made of imprisonment, but always only of *obedience;* compare Gen. xli. 44, "without thee no man shall move his hand or his foot in all the land of Egypt," but especially ver. 40, "thou shalt be over my house, and all my people shall kiss thy mouth." Besides we have בנפישׁו, which, according to the בכבל in ver. 18, and the usual sense of the ב after the verb of binding, Ps. cxlix. 8, must be explained: *with* his soul, so that the soul is what binds the fetter. On the second clause, comp. Gen. xli. 39, where Pharoah declares Joseph to be the man of the greatest understanding and wisdom, and on the ground of this exalts him to the highest honour.—That Jacob in ver. 23 is the *man*, is manifest from "his people" in ver. 24. Still he came with his whole house, Gen. xlv. The verse is an appendage to ver. 16; Jacob came on the occasion of a famine, ver. 16, and was introduced by Joseph who had risen to the

highest honour, ver. 17-22. *He sojourned*, Gen. xlvii. 4. *In the land of Ham*, Ps. lxxviii. 51.

Ver. 24–28.—Ver. 24. *And he made his people very fruitful, and stronger than their enemies.* Ver. 25. *He turned their heart to hate his people, to use subtlety against his servants.* Ver. 26. *He sent Moses his servant, Aaron whom he chose.* Ver. 27. *They laid down beside them all his signs and wonders in the land of Ham.* Ver. 28. *He sent darkness, and made it dark, and they resisted not his word.*—On ver. 24, comp. Gen. xvii. 6, xxviii. 3, Ex. i. 7, 9. Berleb: "Behold there the concealed blessing in the secret of the cross. Under it here the people of God are in the most fruitful state." The expression "he made them strong," does not refer to the mere increase of numbers, but, as is evident from the clause, "more in number and stronger than we," of the fundamental passage, to the strength arising from this increase.—In ver. 25 the great rationalism of Lutheran theology in regard to the relation of God to the wicked, comes out in the many forced translations and arbitrary expedients which have been had recourse to in connection with the passage; compare on the co-operation of God in evil, which for example brings it about that a certain person writes a *life* of Jesus instead of gratifying his evil passions in another way, Beitr. 3, p. 462 ss., and at Ps. li. 5.[a] *He turned*, ver. 25, (comp. 1 Sam. x. 9), in order that he might furnish an opportunity for the display of his wonderful power. In like manner, according to Isaiah xliii. 17, God led out Pharoah and his hosts to pursue the Israelites. The Hiph. of נכל occurs elsewhere only in Gen. xxxvii. 18, where it is used of the wicked plots of Joseph's brethren against him. It corresponds to the נתחכמה in Ex. i. 10.—Ver. 27 is according to Ps. lxxviii. 43. The *things* of his signs,—the whole number of them, Ps. cxlv. 5, and at Ps. lxv. 3.—*The sending of darkness* in verse 28 is to be taken in a figurative sense the impending displea-

a Calvin: "We see that it is deliberately propounded by the prophet that the whole government of the church is subject to God. . . . And this is expressly affirmed, lest we should think that the hearts of the wicked run freely on to our destruction. But this ought to be sufficient for us that, whatever plots the devil and wicked men may lay against us, God restrains their efforts; faith is doubly confirmed when we hear that, not only their hands, but even their hearts and their minds are held bound, so that they cannot even lay a single plan except what God permits."

sure and misery; the Egyptians were, in this sense, covered with darkness from the first to the last plague. The second-last plague in Egypt, Ex. x. 22, 23, is only *alluded to*. This plague was well-fitted to serve as the basis for such a figurative representation, as even in the Mosaic account it manifestly bears a symbolical character, from which the singular prominence given to *darkness* admits of being explained: the darkness which covered Egypt was an image of the divine wrath; comp. Egypt and the Books of Moses, p. 123. Against the idea that the ninth plague comes into notice here in the same way in which the others do, which are mentioned in the following verses, may be urged the formal arrangement—it would not be glanced at in a general way, but would, like the rest, have a separate part assigned to it —next, the circumstance that the following plagues, with the insignificant exception of the plague of the gnats and flies, are introduced in their historical order, and finally, the completely decisive ground, that, even by this plague, the heart of Pharaoh was not broken; to which, therefore, the second clause is not suitable, whereas it becomes perfectly suitable, as soon as the darkness is considered as comprehending the ten plagues, and, of course, the destruction of the first born; comp. ver. 36, which corresponds to the second clause here. Several interpreters, to get out of the difficulty, refer the second clause, in a most unsatisfactory manner, to *Moses* and *Aaron*. A similar figurative use of darkness, finally, occurs, for example, in Is. xlv. 7, "Making light and creating darkness, making peace and creating *evil*," l. 3, "I will clothe the heaven in darkness." The הֶחְשִׁיךְ never means "to be dark," always "to make dark," comp. Am. v. 8, "He makes the day dark into night," also Ps. cxxxix. 12, Jer. xiii. 16, "before he make it dark." The margin, "his word," instead of "his words," has proceeded merely from a misapprehension of the obviously correct sense, and of the meaning arising from it, that the discourse here can be only of a single word of God, either to the Egyptians or to Moses and Aaron.

Ver. 29–38.—Ver. 29. *He changed their water into blood, and killed their fish.* Ver. 30. *He filled their land with frogs, in the chambers of their kings.* Ver. 31. *He spake, there came vermin, midges in all their boundaries.*—Ver. 32. *He gave hail*

for their rain, flaming fire in their land. Ver. 33. *And destroyed their vine and their fig-tree, and brake the trees of their boundaries.* Ver. 34. *He spake, there came locusts, and caterpillars without number.* Ver. 35. *And they consumed all the grass in their land, and consumed the fruit of their field.*—Ver. 36. *And he smote all the first born in their land, the firstlings of all strength.* Ver. 37. *And he led them out with silver and gold, and there was no one that stumbled among their tribes.* Ver. 38. *Egypt was glad when they went out, for fear had fallen upon them.*—This representation of the Egyptian plagues in detail, which terminates in the same way in ver. 38, in which the general view did in ver. 28, falls into two groups of three and seven verses, of which the last is again divided by a four and a three. Of the ten plagues of Egypt, only seven are mentioned, the omissions being the fifth and the sixth, the destruction of the cattle and the boils, and the ninth, the darkness, the same which are omitted in Ps. lxxviii. Four plagues are allotted to the first group, and three to the second, two of which are described in the first portion, while the second is wholly filled up with the last decisive plague.—That in ver. 29 the emphasis lies upon the *result*, the death of the *fish*, is clear from the consideration, that in this way unity is imparted to this first group;—he deprived them of their beloved fish, and gave them, in and out of the water, hated frogs, and in addition to this, upon their land abominable flies and gnats. Ps. lxxviii. 44, Ex. vii. 18, 21, are to be compared. —On the second clause of ver. 30, comp, Ex. vii. 28. *Their* kings,—because the king represented kings, and dwelt in the king's palace.—In ver. 31, the little *gnats*, which are wholly omitted in Ps. lxxviii. (comp. on כנים Egypt, p. 113), must take precedence of the larger *flies*, Ps. lxxviii. 45.—In the first division of the second group, in the transition from the animal to the vegetable kingdom, the *hail* which destroyed the trees, and the *locusts* which destroyed the plants, are bound together in one pair;—the whole food of the people was thus destroyed, Gen. i. 29.—In ver. 32, the allusion to Lev. xxvi. 4, "And I give you rain in its season," shows that נתן is to be taken in the sense of *to give* and not *to make for anything*:—he gave to them as their rain, or instead of the mild fertilizing rain which he gives to his people in its season, destructive hail with lightning, a fine gift if

they would consider it as such. On the second clause, comp. Ps. lxxviii. 48.—In reference to the *vine*, in ver. 33, comp. at Ps. lxxviii. 47.—In ver. 34, ילק, the licker, stands in parallel with the locust, as does חסיל, the gnawer—both poetical epithets of the locust; comp. the Christol. 3, p. 351.—On ver. 35, comp. Ex. x. 5. —In ver. 36, the divine vengeance proceeds from the food of man to man himself; comp. "he smote" here with the same word in ver. 33. The *ninth* plague must be left out because it destroyed this progress. It is omitted for a similar reason in Ps. lxxviii. For the same reason, the ravages which the hail made among the cattle are not alluded to. Ps. lxxviii. 51 is to be compared: "He smote all the first born in Egypt, the firstlings of the strength in the tents of Ham." The borrowing here cannot fail to be observed.—*With silver and gold*,—the silver and golden vessels of the Egyptians, which they received from them at their departure as *presents;* comp. Beitr. 3. p. 507 ss. The second clause depends upon Ex. xiii. 18, "And the children of Israel went strong out of the land of Egypt," comp. Is. v. 27.—On ver. 38, comp. Ex. xi. 1, xii. 31–33, according to which Pharaoh sent away the children of Israel by neck and shoulder, "for they said, We shall all die.". On the second clause, Ex. xv. 16, Deut. xi. 25.

Ver. 39–45.—Ver. 39. *He spread out a cloud for a covering, and fire during the night to give light.* Ver. 40. *They asked, he caused quails to come, with the bread of heaven he satisfied them.* Ver. 41. *He opened the rock, waters gushed out, ran in dry places like a river.* Ver. 42. *For he remembered his holy word with Abraham his servant.*—Ver. 43. *And thus he led out his people with joy, his chosen ones with a shout.* Ver. 44. *And gave to them the lands of the heathen, and they received the labour of the nations.* Ver. 45. *So that they should have observed his statutes, and kept his laws. Hallelujah.—He spread out a cloud for a covering*, ver. 39, namely, during their journeys; for while they lay encamped, it rested over the tabernacle. Num. x. 34, ought to be compared: "And the cloud of the Lord was *over them* by day, when they rose up from their encampment." In the burning wilderness the cloud was a protection to the congregation of the Lord against the sun (comp. Is. iv. 5, 6), an emblem of the protection of the favour of God

which at all times watches over his church (comp. the interpretation given by Isaiah in other passages); and during the night the pillar of cloud and fire enlightened the darkness, an emblem of the light which the Lord makes to shine at all times upon the darkness of the misery of his church. The *spreading out* does not suit the second clause; we have, therefore, a Zeugma. That לַיְלָה is an adverb is evident from Num. ix. 16, "The cloud covered it and the appearance of fire by night," where, as here, "by day" is omitted; and also from Ex. xiii. 21. Ps. lxxviii. 14, ought to be compared.—The שָׁאַל in ver. 40 is impers. *they asked.* In reference to the *quails*, comp. Ps. lxxviii. 26, 27, and the *manna*, ver. 22–25. *The bread of heaven* is from Ex. xvi. 4; comp. Ps. lxxviii. 24, 25. On "He satisfies them," comp. Ex. xvi. 3, 8, 12.—On ver. 41, comp. Ps. lxxviii. 20, on צִיָּה Ps. lxxviii. 17, on נָהָר ver. 16.—*For he remembered*, ver. 42, Berleb.: "That we may again come to the fountain from which have flowed so many and so great acts of kindness on the part of God towards his people." *The holy = glorious word of God*, far above all feebleness and deceit,—is the word regarding the possession of Canaan, comp. ver. 8 and 11. The fundamental passage is Ex. ii. 24, "And God remembered his covenant with Abraham, and with Isaac, and with Jacob;" comp. "which he confirmed with Abraham," ver. 9. We cannot translate "*to* Abraham," for the word is not one which God merely uttered, but one which he *gave*.—On ver. 44, comp. Ps. lxxviii. 55.—On ver. 45, Deut. iv. 40, xxvi. 17, Ps. lxxviii. 7. The observance of the commandments of God by Abraham appears even in Gen. xviii. 19, as the object of the covenant. The Psalmist adds at the conclusion a fatal knot. The observance of the commandments of God is the object for which Israel has had given to him possession of Canaan, and these commandments Israel has wilfully *violated;* the word of God, therefore, regarding the possession of Canaan to the patriarchs, and all that God has done in the days of old in fulfilment of that word, can furnish no support whatever to his hopes. The business of the following Psalm is to untie this knot.

PSALM CVI.

May God, who is rich in mercy towards his own people, ver. 1, 2, if indeed they walk according to his commandments, ver. 3, manifest also at the present time this mercy towards his suffering church, ver. 4, 5. Assuredly we have sinned grievously, and hitherto have not fulfilled the condition of salvation; and therefore, instead of salvation, we have had severe *punishment*, in Egypt, ver. 6–12, in the wilderness, ver. 13–33, and in Canaan, where the consummation of the *sins* of the people has at last led to the consummation of the punishment, the captivity and the desolation, ver. 34–43. But as on former occasions, the mercy of God shone forth in many ways through his wrath, so has he even now heard the cry of his people in their deserved misery, and turned towards them the heart of his oppressors, so that, *in spite of his sins*, which brought to a termination the prayer begun in ver. 4, 5, he can full of confidence call upon the Lord to complete the work which he had begun, and to gather them from among the heathen, ver. 44–48.

The beginning and the conclusion, which consist each of five verses, make up a decade. The name Jehovah occurs in all in these verses seven times, four times in ver. 1–5, and three in ver. 44–48. The representation of the sins of the people is complete in four strophes, of which the first, containing seven verses, represents the transgressions in *Egypt*, the second and third, each containing ten verses, the transgressions in the *wilderness*, ver. 13–22, and ver. 24–33, and the third, containing likewise two, the transgressions in *Canaan*. The two first strophes are separated from the two last by an intercalary verse, ver. 23, which this Psalm has in common with Ps. civ. and cv. The fourth strophe, corresponding to the decade of the beginning and the conclusion, is divided by a five and a five, while the second is devided by a three and a seven.

The situation is described exactly in ver. 46 and 47. A better turn of fortune has visited the Israelities, inasmuch as the Lord has turned towards them the hearts of their oppressors, ver. 46, but still they are in *captivity*, scattered among the heathen, and full deliverance is still the object of desire and prayer, ver. 47;

comp. also ver. 4 and 5. The situation therefore is that *towards the end of the captivity*, exactly corresponding to that in the prayer of Daniel at the beginning of the Medo-Persian dynasty, ch. ix., a passage with which our Psalm is so intimately connected, that it may be considered as its lyrical echo. The result thus set forth may still be adopted even though we were to conclude from the clause at the conclusion, "and all the people say Amen," that the Psalm was intended for use in the sanctuary, and must thus have been first composed after the return from the captivity. The situation in this case, instead of being a real, would be an assumed one. The Psalmist, with the design of leading the people into a full understanding of their own experience, would in this case place himself at the time immediately before complete security had been obtained in the room of the people who are here introduced as speaking from beginning to end. This conclusion is almost perfectly conclusive. Meetings for the public worship of God (and only such in general can be supposed to be implied in the conclusion) assuredly took place during the captivity: a people of God cannot exist without worshipping God.

Our Psalm is the concluding portion of that trilogy of the captivity which is appended to the Davidic trilogy, and with which it forms one whole. This is evident from the joyful conclusion,—a conclusion which manifestly belongs to one great whole—and also from the Halleluja at the beginning and at the end,—a circumstance all the more decisive, as such a conclusion occurs also at Ps. cxiii., which is connected in a similar manner with Pss. cxi. and cxii.—in manifest connection with the simple Halleluja of Pss. civ. and cv.

The *design* of the Psalm is to awaken the people to a lively consciousness of the truth, that though there is much of sin in us, there is much more of grace in God, and thus to untie the knot which the Psalmist had tied at the end of Ps. cv., to which ver. 3 here alludes in the intimation made of the dependence of the possession of Canaan upon obedience to the commandments of God,—to remove the enemy which threatened to rob the people of the help of which they had been assured by nature, Ps. civ., and by history, Ps. cv., and of the restoration to their own land.

The *main-character* of the Psalm is that of a *confession of sin*. This is manifest from the general position placed at its head, "we

have sinned with our fathers, we have committed iniquity, we have done wickedly," of which all that follows is to be considered merely as a development. It is also manifest from the circumstance that the sinfulness of the people is the one thought which runs through all the strophes, and is the regularly and exclusively predominant one. It can be considered here only as a subordinate matter introduced in the way of preparation for the conclusion, to point to the divine compassion which insures deliverance to Israel, notwithstanding their sins, ver. 8–12, 23.

The object of the confession of sin is in the first instance to represent the hindrance to salvation in its whole extent and with full sharpness, so that the inventive spirit of men troubled by a conscience of sin might be able to add nothing to it. In such a case every thing depends upon the fact that nothing is covered over and palliated: it is only where an awakened conscience sees an entirely true representation of sin that it can appropriate to itself the offered *consolation*. At the same time, however, the full representation of sins by which the people had merited the judgments under which they were sighing might serve completely to justify the former ways of God, and thus to remove one mighty hindrance to hope. It is only the man who gives fully the glory to God in reference to suffering, who sees nothing in it except deserved *punishment*, which with him cannot be misdirected, but must serve the promotion of his glory, that can give to him also the glory in reference to *deliverance*. It is only a true confession of sin that throws light upon the *past* as well as the *future* ways of God.[a]

The older expositors give hence the impression which the Psalm ought to produce on the New Testament church: "O Lord, thou art a gracious God, be gracious to us also poor sinners, for the sake of thy covenant and of thy grace which thou hast promised in Christ, as thou hast been gracious to our forefathers in regard to their sins."

In 1 Chron. xvi., there is given a Psalm-piece, consisting of the beginning of Ps. cv. (ver. 1–15), the whole of Psalm xcvi., and

a Calvin. "If God chastise us severely we immediately imagine that his promises have failed. But when, on the contrary, we are told that we bear the punishment which our sins have deserved, and the promises at the same time are held out to us, by which God offers himself as gracious, immediately we repent with our whole heart."

the beginning (in ver. 34) and the end (in ver. 35–36) of our Psalm. According to the common idea the author of Chronicles is understood to relate that this composition was sung at the erection of the sanctuary on Sion under David. The older expositors hence conclude that the three Psalms from which this fragment is made up, were composed by David, or at least in the time of David; in more modern times a proof has been got of the non-genuineness of Chronicles or of the arbitrary manner in which the Jews fixed the authors and the dates of the Psalms. But the whole depends upon a *mistake*. The description of the service which took place at the introduction of the ark of the covenant in 1 Chron. xvi. terminates before the Psalm-piece is given: so that we cannot conceive of any use made of that Psalm-piece at this festival. David had already pronounced the blessing, ver. 2, and the people had been dismissed with gifts, with which, according to 2 Chron. vi. 18, 19, the festival was closed. A narrative is next given of the arrangement of the sacred music in the tabernacle. It is recorded next in ver. 7, that David on the same day caused thanks to be given by Asaph and his brethren, and on the occasion of the great memorable day of the establishment of the sacred music, there is given the essence in ver. 8–16 of those Psalms which at all times were sung, accompanied by this music, in representation of the whole Psalter. The author of Chronicles naturally formed his composition out of these Psalms which were sung in his day most frequently, and with the greatest relish. In like manner it was natural that he should not bind himself strictly to the text of the borrowed passages, but should introduce slight *variations* wherever such seemed suitable. The defence lies in this, that he does not, like the author of the Books of Samuel, in 2 Sam. xxii., pledge himself to give a faithful transcript of another man's labour, but has rather published expressly an abstract by himself; and we must therefore expect it *a priori* to be given with that freedom which is manifested in selecting from Ps. cv. only the beginning, and from our Psalm the beginning and the conclusion.

Ver. 1—5.—Ver. 1. *Halleluja, praise the Lord, for he is good, for his mercy lasts for ever.* Ver. 2. *Who can express the mighty deeds of the Lord, shew forth all his praise.* Ver. 3. *Blessed are they who keep judgment, practise righteousness at all times.* Ver. 4. *Remember me, O Lord, with the favour*

of thy people, visit me with thy salvation. Ver. 5. *So that I see the good of thy chosen, rejoice with the joy of thy people: be glad with thine inheritance.*—The beginning, *praise the Lord,* corresponds designedly to that of Ps. cv. The *enduring* of the goodness, = the being good of the Lord, is the eternal duration of his mercy; compare at the fundamental passage, Ps. cv.—The transcendant greatness of the deeds of God, ver. 2, ought not to keep us back from praising him, but contains in it the strongest motive to praise, comp. Ps. xl. 5, lxxi. 15; the further off the goal is, the more earnestly must we strive.—The third verse points to the condition with which participation in the eternal mercy of God is connected, in agreement with Ps. cv. 45, ciii. 18, ci.;—the import being, "Blessed the people, if they only." The church does not allow herself to be incidentally turned aside by this important "if," but proceeds onward from praising the mercy of the Lord, ver. 4 and 5, to pray that that mercy may be imparted to her. After she had offered up such a prayer, however, it goes to her heart with a hundred fold greater weight; she acknowledges that the condition by no means exists in her case, and lays hold of the compassion of God as the last anchor of deliverance. It is exactly in the same way that the confession of sin in Dan. ix. 4, is appended to the words, "he keepeth covenant and mercy for ever, for those who love him."—In ver. 4 it is not the Psalmist himself that speaks, but the present generation, compare ver. 6—such personal references are very rarely to be adopted in these Psalms that were composed at the period of the captivity and subsequently, and indeed scarcely ever in any of the non-Davidic Psalms. The conclusion of the Psalm shows that the speaker is the people. They pray in their misery to the Lord, who appeared to have *forgotten* them, that he would think upon them and visit them with that favour which *belongs* to his own people, and which they themselves had so readily enjoyed in early times. The בְּרִי, ver. 5, is used also in other passages of Israel when עַם had preceded, for example, Zeph. ii. 9. The *inheritance of God* is Israel, compare Deut. ix. 29.

Ver. 6-12.—Ver. 6. *We have sinned with our fathers, we have transgressed, we have done wickedly.* Ver. 7. *Our fathers in Egypt understood not thy wonders, they thought not on the*

multitude of thy tender mercies, and rebelled at the sea, at the Red Sea. Ver. 8. *And he delivered them for his name's sake, that he might make known his strength.* Ver. 9. *And rebuked the Red Sea, when it was dried up, and he led them through the floods as through the wilderness.* Ver. 10. *And delivered them from the hand of him who hated them, and redeemed them from the hand of the enemy.* Ver. 11. *And the waters covered their enemies, there was not one of them left.* Ver. 12. *Then they believed in his word, they sang his praise.*—The three verbs in ver. 6, by which in the most impressive manner the greatness of the transgressions of the people is descried, occur also in 1 Kings viii. 47, in the prayer of Solomon at the dedication of the temple, and also in Dan. ix. 5, in the same order and in a similar connection. 1 Kings viii. 47 is undoubtedly the fundamental passage. There occurs also an undeniable reference in ver. 46 to the prayer of Solomon, which the author of Kings took from its ancient source, so that no deduction can be drawn from it as to the date of composition of these books; compare ver. 50 there. *With our fathers,*—along with them, so that we and they together form one corrupted mass. The transgressions of the fathers of Israel, the Mosaic generation (compare ver. 7, Ps. lxxviii. 8, 12), are next given in detail, in ver. 7–33, and their own sins or those of Israel in Canaan, ver. 34–43.—On ver. 7 compare Ps. lxxviii. 11, 42; on דמרד at lxxviii. 17. The expressive mention of the locality is intended to direct attention to this the first place where Israel's hardness of heart was displayed after the omnipotence and the grace of God had been made known to them in the ten plagues of Egypt. It appears that in the description of the locality allusion is made to Ex. xv. 4, "the chariots of Pharoah and his host he cast into the *sea*, and his chosen warriors were drowned in the Red Sea." The conjecture עלים, referring to the Red Sea, is decidedly to be rejected. The ב can be accounted for only by its coming after the more exact word על. But for it, the rebellion must be conceived of as having taken place in the sea.—*For his name's sake,* ver. 8,—compare Ps. xxiii. 3, xxv. 11.—*He rebukes,* ver. 9, compare civ. 7. On "as the wilderness," concisely, for "as one goes through the wilderness," compare Is. lxiii. 13, "who led them through the floods, like the horse in the wilderness, they did not stumble."

—Ver. 12 depends on Ex. xiv. 31; on the second clause compare Ex. xv. 1. That Israel *believed* is not said to his praise, but to the praise of God who constrained them as it were to a momentary faith, and in view of the following paragraph, according to which they immediately lost this faith thus wrought in them.

Out of the number of the transgressions of the people in the wilderness, the Psalmist gives prominence in the first decade to three, ascending, without any regard to arrangement as to time, from the smaller to the greater: eager impatience in demanding flesh, ver. 13-15, rebellious attack upon the rank given to the princes by God, ver. 16-18, direct attack upon God in erecting and worshipping the calf, ver. 19-22. The reason why the Psalmist dwells at such length upon the sins of Israel in the wilderness, is not merely because these are detailed in the Books of Moses as a glass for all future times, but because he sees in the exclusion, as the consequence of these, of that sinful generation from Canaan, a type of the leading away into captivity from Canaan of their posterity, comp. ver. 27.

Ver. 13–22.—Ver. 13. *They hasted, forgot, waited not for his counsel.* Ver. 14. *And lusted in the wilderness, and tempted God in the desert.* Ver. 15. *And he gave them their desire, and sent leanness into their soul.* Ver. 16. *And they envied Moses in the camp, Aaron the holy one of the Lord.* Ver. 17. *The earth opened and swallowed up Dathan, and covered the company of Abiram.* Ver. 18. *And a fire was kindled among their company, flame burnt up the wicked.* Ver. 19. *They made a calf in Horeb, and worshipped a molten image.* Ver. 20. *And changed their glory into the image of an ox that eateth grass.* Ver. 21. *They forgot God their Saviour, who had done great things in Egypt.* Ver. 22. *Wonders in the land of Ham, terrible things at the Red Sea.*—On ver. 13, Berleb: "It might well be said, except ye see signs and wonders ye will not believe," John iv. 48. On "they hasted," comp. Ex. xxxii. 8, "they have turned aside hastily from the way which I commanded them." *His works*, comp. Deut. xi. 3, 4, Dan. ix. 14. *For his counsel*, "inasmuch as he had already determined when and how he should help them," Berleb.:[a] —On ver. 14 comp. Num. xi. 4, "And the mixed mul-

[a] Calvin. "The haste of our desires is astonishing, so much so that we can scarcely

titude who were among them *lusted a lust*. . . . And they said, who shall give us flesh to eat, ver. 34, and they called the place the graves of lust, because there they buried the people who had lusted." Improper conduct of a similar kind had already been exhibited in connection with the want of support, but the Psalmist brings forward this case here because the sin was more aggravated—formerly it was impatience when in want of the *necessaries* of life, but here it was *lusting*—and because a divine judgment was connected with it. On the second clause comp. Ps. lxxviii. 18.—On "he gave them their desire," ver. 15, comp. Num. xi. 18, ss., Ps. lxxviii. 29, "he gratified their appetite." The וישלח, *and thus sent, even by this;* comp. at Ps. lxxviii. 30. The נפש is the animal, food needing soul; comp. at Ps. lxxviii. 18, cvii. 18, Num. xi. 6, "And now our soul is dried up." This soul, while it desired to be satisfied and filled by this bounty, got its wish, but at the same time in spite of this gift it got also the opposite and its own punishment; for immediately there came on wasting sickness which at last ended in death.—On ver. 16 comp. Num. xvi. 1, ss. On "Aaron the holy one of the Lord"—"holy" does not denote a moral property but the office which he held, his nobility, comp. at Ps. xvi. 3—comp. Num. xvi. 3, where the rebels say, "the whole congregation, they are all *holy*, and wherefore do ye exalt yourselves above the congregation of the Lord, ver. 5, in the morning the Lord will make known who is his and who is holy, ver. 7, he whom the Lord shall choose he is the *holy one*."—The rebellion was followed by a double punishment. The first, ver. 17 here, fell upon the non-Levitical portion of the rebels, the Reubenites, Dathan and Abiram, and their dependants; comp. Num. xvi. (the people of Korah there are the associates belonging to the tribe of Reuben, of him the chief ringleader), xxvi. 10, Deut. xi. 6. These were swallowed up by the earth. On the first clause comp. Num. xvi. 32, "and the earth opened *her mouth*," which is here to be supplied, Deut. xi. 6; on the second, Num. v. 33, "and the earth covered them." The second punishment fell upon *the Levitical portion*, with Korah at their head, comp. Num. xvi. 35, xvii. 5, xxvi. 10. These had *sinned* by fire and were *punished* by fire like the sons of

allow God one day. For unless he immediately answer our call, instantly there arise impatience and at length despair."

Aaron, Lev. x. 2. A similar correspondence between the transgression and the punishment existed in the first fall; the depth of the fall marks by way of contrast the height of the exaltation, comp. Is. xiv. 12.—The indirect assault upon the Lord in his counsel and in his holy one is followed in ver. 19 by the direct one. *They made*—contrary to the prohibition in Ex. xx. 4, 5—*a calf*, intended to represent an ox. They would gladly have made an ox, but they were not able to get this length, so contemptible was the undertaking. The name, calf, is generally used in contempt; the worshippers without doubt called it a bull, according to Philo they made "a golden bull;" comp. the enquiries on the calf-worship in the Beitr. 2 p. 155, ss. Allusion is made to Ex. xxxii. 4, "And he made it a golden calf."—*Their glory*, ver. 20—the God who had lifted them from the dust of debasement to the glory of the children of God, and had distinguished them above all other nations; comp. Deut. iv. 6–8, x. 21, "he is thy praise (thy glory), thy God, who hath done to thee this great and terrible thing which thine eyes have seen." The תבנית is from Deut. iv. 16, 17. On the whole verse comp. Jer. ii. 11. Israel had intended to have worshipped Jehovah under the symbol of the calf or the bull, which they borrowed from the Egyptians (comp. the Beitr. p. 157); but as this symbolizing was incompatible with the nature of Jehovah, they did in reality by it give up the Lord altogether, (comp. 1 Kings xiv. 9, Beitr. p. 159), and were given up by him. They had therefore now, instead of the Lord of heaven and earth—O sinful stupidity!—nothing but an ox which can and will do nothing else than eat grass.—On ver. 21, 22, comp. the full description of the great deeds of the Lord in Egypt, as given in Ps. cv. 27, ss. *In the land of Ham*, Ps. cv. 23, 27. The end of the strophe turns back to its beginning in ver. 13.

Ver. 23. *And he said he would destroy them, had not Moses his chosen stood before him in the breach, to turn away his wrath that he should not destroy them.* The length of this verse harmonises with its important position. Long verses occur in our Psalm only where prominence is intended to be given to some important point. On "he said," not "he thought," Deut. ix. 13, comp. ver. 8. Before "had not" we are to supply, "this would really have happened." *To stand in the breach*—like a warrior who covers with his body the broken

part of the wall of a besieged city, comp. Ex. xiii. 5, xxii. 30. The weapon with which Moses defended the spiritual city is intercessory prayer, comp. Ex. xxxii. 11–14, Deut. ix. 18, 19. In reference to the הֵישִׁיב *turned away*, comp. Ps. lxxviii. 38, and the fundamental passage, Num. xxv. 11, "Phineas *turned* away my anger from the children of Israel." Moses in this matter is not to be considered as a stranger to the people, but as their representative and intercessor. Because at least in him the leader, there was realized the idea of the people, God looked graciously upon the whole people in him, and withdrew the real but qualified determination which he had formed to destroy them, Ex. xxxii. 10, after it had been made known that the *object* of the qualification of the determination existed, a manifestation which was brought about in consequence of the announcement which had been made of the bare determination. And the circumstance that the nation at the very commencement of its history owed its preservation from destruction to *mediation* was sufficient to shew the depth of sinful corruption, and also how little hope could exist of salvation in any other way than through the mercy of God.

Ver. 24. *And they despised the land of beauty, they believed not his word.* Ver. 25. *And murmured in their tents, and did not hearken to the voice of the Lord.* Ver. 26. *And he lifted up his hand on them and overthrew them in the wilderness.* Ver. 27. *And that he overthrew their seed among the heathen, and scattered them in the lands.* Ver. 28. *And they bound themselves also to Baal-peor, and ate the sacrifices of the dead.* Ver. 29. *And enraged him by their deeds, and the plague broke out among them.* Ver. 30. *Then stood up Phineas and judged, and the plague was stayed.* Ver. 31. *And it was reckoned to him for righteousness for all generations for ever.* Ver. 32. *And they provoked him to anger at the waters of strife, and it went ill with Moses for their sakes.* Ver. 33. *For they rebelled against his spirit, so that he spoke inadvisedly with his lips.*—This decade is divided not in the usual way by a 7 and a 3, or by a 5 and a 5, but by 4, 4, 2. First, the rebellion after the sending of the spies and its consequences, ver. 24–27, next the sins of the new generation, their participation in the Moabitish idolatry, ver. 28-31, and the offence at Meribah, ver. 32, 33. The transgressions of the fathers reach the amount of seven; in

the first strophe, one in Egypt, in the second and third, the doubled three in the wilderness. These seven stand opposed to the seven wonders and signs of God on behalf of his people in the preceding Psalm, according to "do ye thus requite the Lord, O foolish people," in Deut. xxxii. 6. In the books of Moses, also, the sevenfold temptations are set over against the sevenfold wonders and signs, Num. xiv. 22.—On "they despised," ver. 24, comp. Num. xiv. 31, "the land which you despised." חמדה never signifies *a wish* or *a desire*, but always *beauty;* comp. the Christol. iii. p. 354, and Jer. iii. 19, where "the land of beauty" stands in parallel with "the goodly heritage." Allusion is made to the descriptions of the beauty of the land, such as Ex. iii. 8, "a good and large land, flowing with milk and honey," Deut. xi. 11-15. *They believed not his word*, by which he repeatedly promises that he would give them the land, but rather the word of the faithless *spies;* comp. Ps. lxxviii. 22, 32.—The first clause of the 25th verse is from Deut. i. 27; the second from Num. xiv. 22.—That the lifting up of the hand in ver. 26 is the gesture of *swearing* (several falsely: he lifted up his hand *against* them) is evident from Num. xiv. 30, "ye shall not come into the land while I have lifted up my hand (comp. Gen. xiv. 22, Ex. vi. 8) to make you dwell in it," in connection with the express mention of swearing in the case referred to in Num. ver. 28, Deut. i. 34, ii. 14. On "that he had made them fall," comp. Num. xiv. 29, "And your carcases shall fall in the wilderness," ver. 32.—The determination against their *seed*, ver. 27, was not expressed at that time but on another occasion, Lev. xxvi., Deut. xxviii.; it was, however, implied in the determination against the fathers, and is here with propriety deduced from it. The להפיל cannot here be taken in any other sense than that in which it occurs in the preceding verse, not only because of the similarity of the expression, but also because of the intimate connection of the two facts which is intended to be brought into notice by the similarity of the expression. The fundamental passage also, Lev. xxvi. 38, "and ye perish among the heathen, and your enemy consumes your land," shews how little reason there is for changing the construction. The בגוים corresponds exactly to במדבר. The wilderness was not more destructive for the *fathers* than residence among the heathen shall be for the *children;* the latter is also in

Ps. cvii. spoken of as typified by the former. The second clause is from Lev. xxvi. 33, "And I will scatter you among the heathen."—The first clause of ver. 28 is from Num. xxv. 3, comp. ver. 5.—*They bound themselves* is explained by "to walk after Baal-peor" of Deut. iv. 3. Baal-peor, the proprietor of Peor, was the name given to the Moabitish idol Kamosh only in that country, from one of the places where he was worshipped, Mount Peor, Num. xxiii. 28, at the foot of which Israel at that time lay encamped, comp. the Treatise on Balaam, p. 248 ss. The name never occurs except in connection with that locality and that circumstance. It is manifest from the fundamental passage that by "the dead" are meant the dumb dead idols, 1 Cor. xii. 2, in opposition to the living God, Jer. x. 10, Num. xxv. 2, "And they invited the people to the sacrifice of *their God*, and the people did eat and worshipped their God." The one word brings together what is spread out in Jer. x. 3-10, Ps. cxv. 5, ss. Other expositions are to be rejected, because they bring forward a circumstance not mentioned in the original narrative, and to that narrative the Psalmist throughout confines himself.—On ver. 29 comp. Num. xxv. 18, 19, Ps. lxxviii. 58. The two members are related to each other as cause and effect; and because they thus provoked him, therefore. The פָּרַץ is to break in, Ex. xix. 24. —Ver. 30 agrees as to expression, still more literally with Num. xvii. 13, "And he (Aaron) stood (propitiating) between the living and the dead, and the plague was stayed," and also with the fundamental passage concerning Phinehas, Num. xxv. 8. The פָּלַל signifies in Pi. always to judge; and this sense appears here entirely suitable as soon as we get a right view; objections such as those of Gousset disappear of their own accord, "Judicial authority and legal right were wanting." The act of Phinehas was a judicial one. The *judges* of Israel to whom Moses had given commandment, "let every one put to death his people who have bound themselves to Baal-peor," sat at the door of the tabernacle and wept, Num. xxv. 5, 6, thus intimating their *will*, but at the same time their want of strength to judge, and exhorting every one who possessed it to act in their room, and under their authority. When therefore the commandment was given, the desire to witness the execution existed in the ordinary judges, Phinehas came forward who possessed what they wanted in their room.—

At ver. 31 we should compare for the expression Gen. xv. 6, the only passage where it occurs, and for the subject, Deut. vi. 25, xxiv. 13, at Ps. xvii., xxiv. 5. The language does not refer to the *first* justification, but to the *second*, to the good works of one already in a state of grace, by which he obtains from God, who recompenses every one according to his works, a reward of grace, as Phinehas obtained on the present occasion the priesthood for his family, comp. Num. xxv. 13. At the expression, "for all generations for ever," we are to consider that these gifts may be lost *temporarily* in the same way in which they were won, and really were lost, as was the case with the family of David; and further, that the everlasting priesthood was promised to Phinehas only in opposition to the other descendants of Aaron, compare Deut. xv. 17, Lev. xxv. 46, Christol. 2, p. 433. The strong prominence given to the deed of Phinehas, which was scarcely called for by the tendency of the Psalm, as also to the similar action of Moses, gives rise to the idea that the Psalmist had before his eyes a man of his own day, who stood in the breach like the spiritual hero of antiquity. If this be so, the person alluded to can be only Daniel, according to Ez. xiv. 14, 20, according to the relation of our Psalm to Dan. ix., where Daniel in a very special manner stands in the breach on behalf of his people, and according to the manifest allusion to Daniel previously made in the preceding Psalm.—On *the waters of Meribah*, ver. 32, compare at Ps. xcv. 8. *For their sakes*, because their *unbelief* called forth the *failure* of faith on the part of Moses, comp. Deut. i. 37, iii. 26, Beitr. B. p. 425.—Ver. 33 developes "for their sakes" more fully, because while they rebelled against the spirit of the Lord, Moses was so far affected by their rebellious unbelief that he momentarily became weak in faith, and doubting words fell from his lips, those viz., of Num. xx. 10, "Hear, ye rebels, shall we bring water for you out of the rock." *His spirit*, not the Spirit of Moses, (Luther, for they vexed his heart), but the Spirit of God. For המרה with the accusative does not mean to vex or to embitter, but always to rebel against any one (comp. at Ps. lxxviii. 17, 56), and occurs in this sense even in ver. 7, 43 of the present Psalm; the words, "to rebel against the Spirit of the Lord," correspond to "to rebel against the *words* of God," Ps. cvii. 11, or against his *mouth*. "They rebelled," stands in reference to "ye

rebels," of the fundamental passage. The *spirit* of the Lord is mentioned as his power and presence watching over Israel, comp. Is. lxiii. 11, "who put his Holy Spirit in the midst of them," ver. 10, "And they rebelled and vexed his Holy Spirit," Eph. iv. 30. The events at Meribah are designedly placed at the end, although they preceded those mentioned in ver. 28-31. For the effects of the former extended to the latter. That Moses, the holy leader of the people, must die because of their sin, before he entered the land of promise, gives us a deep insight into the sinfulness of the people, and makes us look upon them with trembling expectation, entering the land of promise.

From the *fathers* the Psalmist turns in ver. 34-43 to the *sons:* in the first half of the decade, their *sins*, and in the second the *judgment* of God. Ver. 34. *They did not destroy the nations, concerning whom the Lord spake to them.* Ver. 35. *And mixed with the heathen and learned their works.* Ver. 36. *And served their idols, which were a snare to them.* Ver. 37. *And offered their sons and their daughters to the lords.* Ver. 38. *And shed innocent blood, the blood of their sons and of their daughters, whom they offered to the idols of Canaan, and the land was polluted with blood.* Ver. 39. *And they were defiled with their works, and committed whoredom with their deeds.* Ver. 40. *Then the anger of the Lord burned against his people, and he abhorred his inheritance.* Ver. 41. *And gave them into the hands of the heathen, and those who hated them ruled over them.* Ver. 42. *And their enemies oppressed them, and they were brought into subjection under their hand.* Ver. 43. *Many times did he deliver them, but they rebelled against him with their counsel, and were brought low by their iniquity.*—*They did not destroy*, ver. 34, not because of want of inclination, but because they were deficient in strength, in consequence of their guilt, not from feelings of compassion, but from want of holy zeal and from slothfulness. *Concerning which the Lord spake to them*, comp. Ex. xxiii. 32, 33, xxxiv. 11-15.—*They mixed*, ver. 35, in spite of the fresh warning of Joshua, Jos. xxiii. 12, 13. A commentary is furnished by Jud. iii. 6, "And they took their daughters for wives, and they gave their own daughters to their sons, and they served their gods," comp. Deut. vii. 3. Berleb.: "Ah! how common is such a mixture even among the pious at this day!" On the second clause, comp. Deut. xviii. 9, xx. 18.—*For a*

snare, ver. 36, for a cause of misery, inasmuch as it called down, upon them the wrath of God, comp. Ex. x. 7, Deut. vii. 16.—On "they offered their sons," ver. 37, Berleb.: "Among us such sacrifices take place by careless bringing up of children, when parents encourage them for example in pride and other sins, offer them to the god of the world, carefully instil into their minds the maxims of the world, and fill them with love of vanity and show." The שדים occurs only here and in the fundamental passage, Deut. xxxii. 17, "They offered to Shedim, no-gods, gods which they knew not." The Shedim there corresponds to Elohim; the bad sense (Luther: to devils) does not lie in the word itself, but is deduced from the next word, "no-god," corresponding to "which they knew not" of the second clause. Hence the word is not derived from שדד *to destroy*, nor from ܫܕܐ to *be black*, but from ܫܕܐ to rule. They are the κύριοι in 1 Cor. viii. 5, the πρυτανεις κόσμου θεοὶ in Wis. xiii. 2, the poetical word for the prosaic Baal; comp. with the above passage in Deut., Jud. ii. 11, 12, where we have first "they served Baalim," and afterwards "they walked after other gods." The bad sense which the word has in Syriac owes its existence to the influence of Christianity, "The gods of Canaan" in ver. 38 is the corresponding expression.—"They shed innocent blood," in ver. 38, depends upon Deut. xix. 10, "Innocent blood shall not be shed in thy land which the Lord thy God giveth thee for an inheritance, otherwise the guilt of blood shall be against thee." *Which they offered*,—contrary to the strict commandment, Deut. xii. 31, xviii. 10. On "the land was polluted with blood," comp. Num. xxxv. 33, "And ye shall not pollute the land with blood wherein ye are, for blood it pollutes the land." The law calls up everything which may impress upon the conscience the horror of shedding blood; and the difference between Jehovah and Moloch is so very sharply marked on this point, that the delusion of those who would have it that both approximated deserves only commiseration. —Ver. 39 collects together the *offence* for the purpose of adding to it the punishment—because they thus, &c. The *whoredom* is of *a spiritual character*, for it is only of this that the language had been used in the first half of the strophe, the contents of which are here resumed; comp. Ex. xxxiv. 16, Lev. xx. 5, xvii. 7, Num. xiv. 33.—On ver. 40, comp. Ps. lxxviii. 59, 62.—On ver. 41, Jud. ii. 14. The second clause is according to Lev.

xxvi. 17.—On the second clause of ver. 42, comp. Jud. iii. 30, viii. 28.—The *frequent deliverances* in ver. 43 are those during the judicial (Jud. ii. 16) and the regal period. *By their counsel,*—their corrupt ungodly plans. The expression "they were brought low by their iniquity," refers to the final complete degradation of the irreclaimable people in being led away into captivity. Allusion is made to the expression intended to refer in like manner to this last catastrophe, Lev. xxvi. 39, "they pine away also by their evil doings," where instead of מכך we have here מקק, comp. also Ez. xxxiii. 10.

Ver. 44-48.—Ver. 44. *And he saw in this their trouble, when he heard their complaint.* Ver. 45. *And remembered for them his covenant, and repented according to the fulness of his compassion.* Ver. 46. *And caused them to be pitied before all who had taken them captive.* Ver. 47. *Deliver us, O Lord our God, and gather us from the heathen that we may praise thy holy name and boast of thy praise.* Ver. 48. *Praised be the Lord the God of Israel from eternity to eternity, and all the people say, Amen, Halleluja.*—Ver. 44-46 contain the facts, impart courage to the conscience-smitten people to resume, in ver. 47, the prayer which had been begun in ver. 4 and 5.—*God saw*, ver. 44, the burden of the matter, their misery, Ex. iv. 31, the object being to be supplied out of what follows. The seeing is the opposite of overlooking, comp. Ex. ii. 25. "In the trouble to them" (comp. Ps. xviii. 6) is here, as in Ps. cvii. 6, from Deut. iv. 30, "in the trouble to thee when all these words strike thee."—On the first clause of ver. 45, comp. Lev. xxvi. 42, "and I remember for them my covenant with Jacob, and also my covenant with Isaac and my covenant with Abraham," and ver. 45. The promise which the Lord there imparts to his people for times of deepest trouble, he has now begun to *fulfil.* "He repented him," depends on Deut. xxxii. 36, "And it repented him of his servants," comp. at Ps. xc. 13. Instead of the singular חַסְדּוֹ, *his mercy*, the Masorites read the plural unseasonably referring to ver. 7. The mercies of the Lord are always the *manifestations* of his mercy, comp. at Ps. lxxxix. 2, also Is. lxiii. 7, comp. Ps. cvii. 43. The discourse here, however, is of the fulness of love dwelling in God. That the Kri must be rejected appears from the fundamental passage, Num. xiv. 19, "pardon still thy people according to the greatness of

thy mercy," comp. Ps. v. 7, lxix. 13, Neh. xiii. 22. A similarly bad Kri is to be found in Lam. iii. 32.—Ver. 46 depends upon 1 Kings viii. 50, comp. 2 Chron. xxx. 9. The operation of God referred to here was seen in facts such as that "he gave Daniel favour and pity in the face of the keeper of the eunuchs," Dan. i. 9, and afterwards made him, and in him the whole *people*, acceptable to Nebuchadnezzar and his successors, and softened the heart of Evilmerodach to have pity upon Jechonia, 2 Kings xxv. 27, so that generally the former bitter hatred against Judah was followed by a more favourable state of mind, by which the way was prepared for their deliverance from captivity and their return to their own land.—That ver. 44–46 refer to the captivity, and not, as many have supposed, to earlier times, is clear from the circumstance that the Psalmist had gone on to the end of ver. 43 speaking about the captivity, from the clause "before all who led them away captives"—the Babylonish captivity was the first, comp. שובינו in Ps. cxxxvii. 3,—from the reference to the fundamental passages of the Pentateuch, which treat of the grace of God towards the people in *captivity*, and to 1 Kings viii.—There rises on the ground of the compassion of God, manifested already towards the people in spite of their sins, the prayer that God would *complete* his *begun* work, and collect together his people from among the heathen. This prayer depends upon Deut. xxx. 3; comp. ver. 4, "And the Lord turn back to thy captivity, and have mercy upon thee, and gather thee from among all the nations among which the Lord thy God has scattered thee,"—a passage to which Isaiah alludes in ch. xi. 12, when he beheld in spirit the captivity as already present, and also Micah in ch. ii. 12. That the language here refers to the return of the *great body* of the people, as it took place afterwards in the first year of Cyrus, appears from the circumstance that there is not the least trace of a return which had *already taken place*, while at the same time an allusion to a commencement which had recently taken place would have given the best foundation for the prayer for a *complete restoration*, from the reference to the fundamental passage, from Ps. cvii. 3, where immediately after the first return, the thing which is here prayed for appears as having already been imparted. On "that we may praise thy holy name," comp. "praise his holy memorial" in Ps. xxx. 4. The Hiph.

of שׁבח, *to glory in a thing*, occurs only here and in Chron. xvi. 35 = התהלל in ver. 5. The *praise of God* is the praise which he procures for himself by his glorious deeds on behalf of his people, comp. Ps. xlviii. 11, and Ps. cv. 3, "boast yourselves in his holy name."—In ver. 48 the common translation is: "and *let* all the people *say* Amen." But that the translation ought to be, "and the people say," is evident from the fundamental passage, Deut. xxvii. 15, "And the whole people answers and says, Amen," and from 1 Chron. xvi. 36, where, instead of ויאמר we have ויאמרו, and they say. The people strike in with these words. Further, according to the common idea, the verse is not to be considered as an original part of the Psalm, but is the doxology added by the compiler of the Psalms as the conclusion of the fourth book. But against this it may be urged that it is inconceivable that the response used by the people was taken from the conclusion of a *book* which had no connection with public worship, that the author of Chronicles would not in this case have quoted it, that the verse is indispensable to the formal arrangement of the Psalm, that the conclusion of the Psalm breathing praise to God remarkably agrees with its *beginning*, which bears a similar character, and also with the conclusion of Ps. civ., that this doxology differs from that at the end of the other books, Ps. xli., lxxii., lxxxix., inasmuch as the *Halleluja* is there wanting, and the *Amen* is placed doubled, and that the *Halleluja* here is manifestly shewn to be an integral portion of the Psalm by its correspondence with that at the beginning. We must therefore maintain that the doxology formed originally the conclusion of the Psalm, and, at the same time, as its length shews, also of the whole collection, Ps. ci.–cvi., and that it was made by the compiler to serve a *second* purpose, namely, to form the conclusion of the fourth book.

PSALM CVII.

The Psalm begins in ver. 1 with an exhortation to praise God, as the object of which, in ver. 2, 3, there is given the deliverance of the church out of great trouble, and its collection out of

all lands. These gracious deeds are celebrated, in ver. 4–32, under different images: of those who wander up and down in the wilderness, hungry and thirsty, and now were led to an inhabited city, ver. 4–9; of those bound with fetters in dark prisons, who are now set at liberty, ver. 10–16; of those sick, who are now healed, ver. 17–22; of those who survive a great storm at sea, ver. 23–32. In this portion there exists a great similarity; first always the *trouble*, next the *prayer*, after this the *deliverance*, and finally the *exhortation* to give thanks. The words "they cry unto the Lord out of their trouble, and he delivers them out of their distresses," and "these may praise the Lord for his mercy, and for his wonders to the children of men," perpetually return. In the last strophe the similarity ceases. It celebrates, in three sections, the overthrow of the power of the world, and the exaltation of Israel, who has now been restored to his own home, has rebuilt his city there, cultivated his land, reaped its fruit, and prospers joyfully in all respects. A conclusion in ver. 43 contains an exhortation to render suitable thanks to the Lord for his favour.

The fundamental number of the Psalm, which praises the gathering of Israel from the four ends of the earth (comp. ver. 3), is *four*. The introduction (the opening, ver. 1, the theme, ver. 2, 3) and the conclusion contain four verses. These enclose four strophes, one of twelve, one of seven, and two of ten verses. The strophe of twelve verses is divided into two halves, ver. 4–9, and ver. 17–22, in the midst of which there stands the strophe of seven verses. The signature of the people of the covenant is thus grouped round that of the covenant. The Psalm was, according to ver. 32, sung at a joyful national religious service, and, according to ver. 22, in connection with the bringing forward of thank-offerings, to which it stands related as soul to body. A very suitable occasion is furnished by the first celebration of the feast of tabernacles after the return from exile, when the whole of Israel were assembled at Jernsalem, and sacrifices were offered to the Lord upon the newly-erected altar; comp. Ezra iii. 1 ss. The Psalm cannot have been composed *earlier*, because public worship was then for the first time resumed, and also because, as intimated in ver. 37, the first harvest was then over. And it cannot have been composed later, because, in the whole Psalm,

there is no mention whatever made of the *temple*, which, had it existed, could not but have been mentioned in ver. 33–42, as it must have occupied a very prominent place among the gracious deeds of God; everywhere the language refers only to a new building of the city, ver. 36, and to a new cultivation of the land, ver. 37. In addition to this, we find everywhere the first joy and elevation of spirit; we see the congregation enjoying its *recovery-festival*. *Another* state of mind very soon prevailed, the *beginning* of which was first seen at the second great festival, at the laying of the foundation of the house of the Lord in the second year, comp. Es. iii. 12; although, at that time, upon the whole, the joyful feeling still prevailed. The machinations of the enemies then came into view. Instead of this, the comparison is between the present and the immediate mournful, and the more remote prosperous past, and the splendid predictions of the prophets. In the prophecies of Haggai, Zechariah, and Malachi, we find ourselves upon an altogether different territory; comp. the introduction to these prophets in the Christol.

Our Psalm is closely related to Ps. cvi. The similarity of the beginning points to this. *Thanks* are given here, ver. 3, for what forms there the object of *desire*, ver. 47. The praise of the Lord, which, in Ps. cvi. 47, is promised, should salvation be imparted, is here rendered to him now that salvation is enjoyed.

The points of contact, however, are only of the same kind as are those of Ps. civ. and ciii., and are to be explained by supposing that another Psalmist, at a later period, appended our Psalm to the group Ps. ci.–cvi., and thus completed the number seven, the *first* and *last* word of which is the *mercy* of the Lord. Even the other points of connection are not of such a kind as necessarily to demand the identity of the author. The author, however, may be the same (what renders it very possible, yea, probable, is that Ps. civ.–cvi. were composed towards the end of the captivity, and our Psalm in the first year after the return): we must, at the same time, maintain, that the trilogy, Ps. civ.–cvi., joined to the Davidic one so as to form one whole, existed as a previously completed group, before the number seven was completed by the addition of our Psalm, and that the cvii. was added as a later supplement. We are led to the same conclusion by the last verse of Ps. cvi., which manifestly belongs, not merely to

this Psalm, but to the whole group, by the indirect testimony of the compilers, who would assuredly not have separated what is inseparably connected together, by elevating the conclusion of Ps. cvi. to the rank of the conclusion of the fourth book; and, finally, by the want of the Hallelujah in Ps. cvii.; whereas, had the connection of Ps. civ.–cvii. been original and absolute, it would, like a connecting band, have closed the whole.

The state of matters is this: to the Davidic trilogy, some Psalmist added, towards the close of the captivity, one of his own composition. This group was rounded off, internally and externally, after the return from the captivity, by the addition of a seventh Psalm.

A great many expositors have failed completely to observe the special reference of the Psalm to the return from the Babylonish captivity; and, led astray by the different figures under which the deliverance of God here appears, have referred every thing to the constant course of divine providence, and to the deliverances which God works out on behalf of different classes of sufferers,[a]— a mistake against which a careful consideration of ver. 2, 3, might have been sufficient to have guarded, as these verses regulate the whole, whose theme they contain. At the same time, there lies a measure of truth at the bottom of this error, in so far as the Psalmist was conscious that he was not a poet for a mere occasion, but that he sang for the church of God of all times. The special references, therefore, are designedly as little marked as possible, so that the Psalm is, in reality, very suitable as a song of thanksgiving for the church, and also for particular members after every deliverance. The general references, however, to mankind at large, must be given up entirely; we find ourselves everywhere in the domain of Jehovah, not of Elohim; the expression, they cry unto the Lord in their trouble, which does not suit the heathen,

[a] Amyraldus, with whom J. H. Michaelis agrees, says: Of the more illustrious interpreters of the Psalms, there is not one who does not acknowledge, that, while many others, and especially the two preceding Psalms, treat of the special providence of God, as exercised on behalf of the Israelites, this one has for its object to celebrate that general care by which God continually governs all men and all nations. It would be difficult to explain how it is said of the heathen that they call upon Jehovah. At the same time there have been individuals who took the correct view. The Syrian translator gives as the title: God collects the Jews out of captivity, and brings them back out of Babylon; the only begotten Son of God also, Jesus Christ, collects the nations from the four corners of the world, by calling upon man to be baptized.

continually recurs; and ver. 11 is suitable only for the people of the law and of revelation.

The strong dependance upon Isaiah and Job is characteristic of the Psalm.

Ver. 1–3.—Ver. 1. *Praise the Lord, for he is good, for his mercy endureth for ever.*—Ver. 2. *The redeemed of the Lord may say so, whom he has redeemed from the hand of trouble.* Ver. 3. *And whom he has assembled out of the lands, from the east and from the west, from the north and from the sea.*— It must have made a deep impression when the Psalmist put into the mouth of the redeemed the same words, ver. 1, with which, on a former occasion, when in deep misery, they had praised their God on the ground of his *former* glorious deeds, and in the exercise of *hope*, Ps. cvi. 1. It is obvious that the verse before us is borrowed from this passage, because the words are not, as is the obvious view at first sight, addressed by the Psalmist to the church, but are put into the lips of the church.—In defining those who are called upon to praise the Lord, the Psalmist announces, in ver. 2 and 3, the *theme* of the Psalm. The "redeemed of the Lord," ver. 2, is from Is. lxii. 12, lxiii. 4. The צַר, according to ver. 6, 13, Ps. cvi. 44, is not *opponents*, but *trouble*, which is here personified and represented as a dangerous enemy, which has Israel in its hands. Throughout the whole Psalm, the discourse is not of enemies, but of trouble.—That ver. 3 refers to the return from the captivity is evident from Ps. cvi. 47, and from the reference to the fundamental passages in Is. lvi. 8, but especially xliii. 5, 6, "From the rising of the sun will I bring thy seed, and from the going down of the sun I will assemble thee, I will say to the north, Give up, and to the south, Keep not back," and xlix. 12, "Behold, these come from afar, and behold these from the north and from the sea and from the land of Sinim." This last passage bears such a close resemblance to the passage before us, particularly in the juxtaposition of the *north* and the *sea*, as to exclude the possibility of its being accidental. Still the reference to the return from captivity is so framed as to admit of the words being applied to those whom the Lord has brought home "from the different places to which necessary duty or severe misfortune had driven them." (Amyr.) The reference to the prophetical fundamental passages shows that we are not carefully to enquire

whether the exiles returned from all these different places. From supposing that the four quarters of heaven must be here fully named, every possible attempt has been made to make out that ים, which can denote only such a sea as represents a quarter of the heavens, viz., the west, or the Mediterranean sea, must mean the south. The correct view, however, is, that the Psalmist here, like the prophet in ch. xlix. 12, is content with naming the places according to the *number* of the quarters of heaven, without exactly naming each quarter. The omission of the south, and the substitution instead of it of the *sea*, on which the scattered exiles returned from Egypt and other lands (comp. Deut. xxviii. 68), might be occasioned by the circumstance that there was nothing in that quarter but a wilderness. The omission of the north in Ps. lxxv. 7, in the enumeration of the quarters of the heavens, proceeded from an exactly similar cause.

Ver. 4–9.—Ver. 4. *They wandered in the wilderness, the pathless desert, they found not a city of habitation.* Ver. 5. *Hungry and thirsty, their soul fainted within them.* Ver. 6. *And they cry to the Lord in their trouble, he delivers them out of their oppressions.* Ver. 7. *And led them in the right way, that they might go to the city of habitation.* Ver. 8. *These should praise to the Lord his mercy, and his wonders to the children of men.* Ver. 9. *For he satisfied the languishing soul, and he filled the hungry soul with good.*—The representation of Israel languishing in exile under the image of those who wander up and down in the wilderness, in this strophe, depends upon the typical import of the march through the wilderness, just as, on the same basis, Isaiah, in the second part of his prophecy, had not unfrequently described the miserable condition of Israel by the figure of the wilderness; for example, xl. 3, xliii. 19, 20. Comp. on other typical applications of the march through the wilderness, the Christol. on Hos. ii. 16. The *desert of the way* (comp. ישימון of the Arabic wilderness, Deut. xxxii. 10, Ps. lxviii. 7, lxxviii. 40) is one which is this *in reference* to the way, in its waylessness; comp. ver. 40, "And allowed them to wander in the wilderness *without* a way." Against the connection of the דרך with what follows, we have, besides this parallel passage, the accents and the want of the article in ישימון. The מושב signifies only *seat, place of abode.* It is obvious, from

ver. 36, that allusion is made to Jerusalem, which, in a certain sense, because it was the city of God, was the dwelling-place of the whole people; comp. at Ps. ci. 8.—The *hunger*, and *thirst*, and the *fatigue* thereby induced (comp. the עמל Lam. ii. 19, Ps. lxxvii. 3) are named in ver. 5 merely as descriptive of the miserable condition of the Israelites in the wilderness *proper*. That the Israelites were not so badly off in a temporal point of view, during the captivity, is manifest from the circumstance, that so many who knew nothing of higher wants, the hunger and the thirst after the beautiful worship of God, and, after the land where the footsteps of God were everywhere visible, preferred remaining where they were. Ps. cxxxvii. shows us what corresponded in the spiritual wilderness to the hunger and the thirst. —The subject in ver. 8 is, "those thus led." The ל must manifestly be construed in the same way in both clauses; it is not the *wonders*, therefore, but the *praise*, that belongs to the children of men (Luther: which he does to the children of men). The praise belongs to the Lord in so far as it is given to him, and to the children of men in so far as it is uttered by them, for the glorifying of God among them.—*The languishing soul*, in ver. 9, is not one which languishes in itself, but, as is obvious from the opposition of the *hungry soul* in the second clause, *the soul of the thirsty*; comp. Is. xxix. 8. *To satisfy*, by delivering from thirst, occurs also in Ps. civ. 13, 16. *With good*, Ps. ciii. 5.

Ver. 10–16.—Ver. 10. *Who must have sat in darkness and the shadow of death, bound in misery and iron.* Ver. 11. *For they rebelled against the words of God, and contemned the counsel of the Most High.* Ver. 12. *Wherefore he brought down their heart in suffering, they fell down and there was none to help.* Ver. 13. *And they cried to the Lord in their trouble, he delivered them out of their distresses.* Ver. 14. *And led them out of darkness and the shadow of death, and break their bands.* Ver. 15. *These should praise to the Lord his mercy, and his wonders to the children of men.* Ver. 16. *For he break the doors of brass, and destroyed the bars of iron.*—The description of the subject in ver. 10 is in reality pre-supposed in ver. 11–14, and after that there is appended, "May these praise."—The first clause of ver. 10 is from Is. ix. 1. The dark prison, as an image of the misery, occurs also in ch.

xlii. 7, xlix. 9. On "the shadow of death," at Ps. xxiii. 4. That the עני denotes the misery of the past, and that, therefore, the discourse is of *iron = iron fetters*, Ps. cv. 18, only in a *figurative* sense, is evident from ver. 41, and from the fundamental passage, Job xxxvi. 8, "And if they be bound in fetters and be holden in cords of affliction," where, according to the connection, the discourse is only of suffering generally, and not of literal imprisonment and fetters.—On המרו, in ver. 11, comp. Ps. cvi. 7, 33, 43. There is a paronomasia between המרו and אמרי, and between עצת and נאצו. The words of the Lord are those which he had spoken to them in his *law*, and by his holy servants the *prophets*. The *counsel* of the Lord is either the counsel which he has taken to destroy secure and rebellious sinners, and to impart salvation only to the penitent—in this case, Isaiah v. 19 is to be compared, where the rebellious sinners, despising the counsel of the Lord, say, "Let him make speed, and hasten his work, that we may see it; let the counsel of the Holy One of Israel draw near and come that we may know it," and also Is. xix. 17, Luke vii. 30, and Ps. cvi. 13—or the counsel which the Lord gave them; in this case, we must comp. Prov. i. 25, and 2 Kings xvii. 13. The latter explanation is favoured by the parallel to the *words* of God.—*He brought down their heart*, in ver. 12,—which had proudly risen up in rebellion and contempt. —On ver. 15 comp. Ps. cxvi. 16, where it is said, "Thou hast loosed my bands," in reference to deliverance from captivity.— Ver. 16 depends upon Is. xlv. 2, where it is said of Cyrus: "I will go before thee, and make the crooked places straight, I will break in pieces the gates of brass, and cut in sunder the bars of iron."

Ver. 17–22.—Ver. 17. *Fools, because of their walk in iniquity, and because of their iniquities, were afflicted.* Ver. 18. *Their soul loathed all food, and they came to the gates of death.* Ver. 19. *And they cried to the Lord in their trouble; he delivered them from their oppressions.* Ver. 20. *He sent his word and healed them, and delivered them from their pits.* Ver. 21. *These should praise to the Lord his mercy, and his wonders to the children of men.* Ver. 22. *And offer sacrifices of praise and recount his works in triumph.*—The אוילים of the first clause corresponds to the יתעני of the second: fools, because of their evil way, *i. e.*, those who, by their wicked conduct, became

fools, were openly represented as such by the *punishments* which were manifestly the consequences of this conduct.—That the cause of the loathing of food, in ver. 18, was not *grief*, as several unsuitably referring to Ps. cii. 4 have supposed, but *severe sickness*, under the figure of which the suffering is here spoken of, (comp. at Ps. ciii. 3) is manifest from ver. 20, "He healed them," and from the fundamental passage, Job xxxiii. 20, where it is said of the sick man, "His life abhorreth food and his soul dainty meat." On the second clause comp. Job xxxiii. 22, Ps. lxxxviii. 3; on the *gates of death*, at Ps. ix. 13.—*The word of the Lord*, by which he procured the salvation of Israel, with its sure consequences (comp. Ps. xxxiii. 9, Matth. viii. 8) appears here under the figure of the physician whom he sends to heal the sick, comp. at Ps. xxx. 3. That the *pits* are equivalent to the *graves* in which they were almost already lying, is evident from ver. 18, and from the fundamental passage, Job xxxiii. 28, "he has delivered my soul from the grave and my life sees the light," (instead of שחתי there, and in ver. 22, 24, 30, we have here the rare form שחיתה, which only occurs again in Lam. iv. 20); comp. Ps. ciii. 4, "who delivers thy life from the pit."—The *thank-offerings*, ver. 22, occur here, according to the second clause, chiefly in connection with what constitutes their essence, thanks; comp. at Ps. l. 14, 23.

Ver. 23–32.—Ver. 23. *Those who cross the sea in ships, do duty in many waters.* Ver. 24. *They see the works of the Lord, and his wonders in the deep.* Ver. 25. *And he spoke and stilled a storm of wind which lifted its billows.* Ver. 26. *They go up to heaven, down to the floods, their soul is melted in trouble.* Ver. 27. *They dance and stagger like a drunken man and are at their wits end.* Ver. 28. *And they cry to the Lord in their trouble, he delivered them out of their distresses.* Ver. 29. *He changed the storm into a calm, and its waves were silent.* Ver. 30. *And they were glad that they had rest, and he brought them to the object of their wish.* Ver. 31. *These should praise to the Lord his mercy, and his wonders to the children of men.* Ver. 32. *And exalt him in the assembly of the people, and praise him in the seat of the elders.*—The *sea* is the standing emblem of the world; comp. at Ps. xlvi., and at Ps. xciii. 3, civ. 6, ss. The church of God, therefore, which

has its existence in the world, appears, ver. 23, under the emblem of those who cross the sea, and carry on their business there, such as mariners, merchants, or fishermen. What is here a figure is, in Mark iv. 36, ss., Matth. viii. 23, ss., Luke viii. 22, ss., embodied in a symbolical action.[a] Those interpreters who could not understand the figurative representation, have, in some cases, been obliged to have recourse to strange expedients. This is the case with those who suppose that the Psalmist has before his mind, not as is the case throughout the whole preceding part of the Psalm, the whole church, but a few of its members, who, during the captivity, were obliged to have recourse, as a temporary occupation, to a seafaring life!—The *works* and *wonders* of the Lord upon the deep, ver. 24, are such as are described in the following verses, the glorious deliverances which he imparts to his own people when they are sent by him on the sea of the world, and are overtaken by a fierce storm of oppression.—On "he said," ver. 25, comp. Ps. cv. 31. The suffix in "*his* billows," does not refer to the *sea*, ים,—for the language in the immediately preceding clauses had not been used of it, but of the *deep*—but to the *Lord;* comp. "all thy waves and thy billows go over me," in Ps. xlii. 7.—On ver. 26, comp. Ps. civ. 8. *To the floods*—the usual place which these occupy. *In trouble*—comp. Gen. xliv. 29. *Melts*—comp. Ps. xxii. 14, xlii. 4.—On ver. 28, Berleb.:—"To the Lord, I mean, men learn then to cry, according to the common saying: *whoever cannot pray let him become a sailor.*"—The יקם, in ver. 29, the abbreviated future, instead of the common form (comp. ver. 33, Ps. xviii. 10), not *he quieted, he calmed*—this sense is not attested—but he *put it*, like the העמיד in ver. 25, *into a calm, he changed it into a calm*, or even *he restored it;* comp. Amos ix. 12. The דממה is not a *gentle breeze*, but always *silence* (γαλήνη, Matth. viii. 26), even in 1 Kings xix. 12. Seasons of rest and revival had already been spoken of in that passage under the figure of a calm after a storm. The suffix in "*their* waves," does not refer to the *sea*, of which, in the plural, no mention had been made, but to the *sailors*, to whom the suffixes in the

[a] Ven.: There are three seas in which the church, like a ship, was tossed about by its billows, at great risk, but with a most prosperous issue, viz., the Jewish, the Pagan, and the Antichristian world.

preceding and following words refer:—their waves, the *trouble* which threatened to ruin them. "*Their* waves" here corresponds to "*his* waves," in ver. 25. The waves belong the *Lord*, in so far as he raises them ("he raises the sea, its waves roar," Is. li. 15), and to the *church* in so far as she is overflowed by them. It is very consolatory that all the waves of the church are also the waves of her Lord; and the corresponding suffixes are fraught with a meaning of deep importance. The waves act as if they intended, at their own hand, to engulph the church; but it is in reality far otherwise. The Lord on high sends them; and hence the unqualified truth of the maxim, "he can change misfortune, he has it in his hands."—The שתק in ver. 30 occurs only in Jon. i. 11, שתק הים, *he stills* or *silences the sea*. The Psalmist appears generally to have had before his eyes the description of the storm which occurs there. The best derivation of מחוז is that of Gousset from חוז = חזה *to see, the object looked at, the mark*.—It is obvious from ver. 22, that in ver. 32 we are to think of a public assembly for the worship of God in the then existing sanctuary of the nation; comp. at Ps. xxii. 22, 2 Chron. xx. 3–5. On the second clause, comp. at Ps. i. 1. The *elders* are the overseers of the people (comp. Ps. cv. 22), the heads of the tribes of Judah and Benjamin, Esr. i. 5, the guides of the congregation in conduct, and also in praise.

Ver. 33–42.—Ver. 33. *He changes rivers into a wilderness, and fountains of water into dry ground.* Ver. 34. *A fruitful land into salt, on account of the wickedness of its inhabitants.* Ver. 35. *He changes the wilderness into a water-pond, and dry land into streams of water.*—Ver. 36. *And maketh the hungry to dwell there, and they build a city of habitation.* Ver. 37. *And sow fields and plant vineyards, and produce fruit of increase.* Ver. 38. *And he blesses them, and they multiply greatly, and he does not suffer their cattle to decrease,*—Ver. 39. *They, whom he diminishes and brings down by the oppression of suffering and sorrow.*—Ver. 40. *He poureth contempt upon princes, and causes them to wander in a pathless desert.* Ver. 41. *And lifteth the needy out of suffering, and maketh families like a flock.* Ver. 42. *The righteous behold it, and are glad, and all wickedness stops its mouth.*—The best view to take of this strophe, is to consider it as the response to the exhortation,

"these may praise to the Lord his mercy," which had run throughout the preceding part of the Psalm, as the song with which the Lord is honoured in the assembly of the people, and praised on the seat of the elders, so that we should read it as if it were divided by marks of quotation from the conclusion of the preceding verse.—"The verbs of this paragraph, partly futures, partly futures with the Vau Con., and partly participles, are most naturally taken in a present sense." Still we should every where consider as added: *as we see it before our eyes.* What the Lord does *generally* is represented on the ground of what he *is now doing.* This is clear from the relation of the present strophe to the one which precedes it, and also from the very manifest references to present times, especially in the 36th (comp. ver. 4 and 7) and the following verses.—First, in ver. 33–35, the Lord, as is obvious from the figure, causes the waters of prosperity and happiness belonging to the world to sink into the ground (the ישם in ver. 35, in its reference to the one in ver. 33), and those of the church to flow copiously; or, Babylon is drained, and the land of the Lord is watered.—Ver. 33 and 34 are usually referred to Israel and his misery. But this is not suitable; and the fundamental passages render it obvious that the whole passage refers to Babylon, the representative of the world at enmity with the kingdom of God, which had recently been destroyed. On comparing Is. xliv. 26, 27, we find the same two positions occurring in an inverted order: "Who saith to Jerusalem, she shall be inhabitated, and to the cities of Judah, they shall be built, and I will raise up the decayed places thereof; that saith to the deep, be dry and I will dry up thy rivers." In Isaiah l. 2, we read, "Behold at my rebuke, I dry up the sea, I change the rivers into a wilderness," in Is. xxi. 1, Babylon is called "the wilderness of the sea" (see the Christol. ii., p. 98), in Jer. l. 38, "a drought is upon her waters, they shall be dried up, for it is the land of graven images," li. 36, "And I dry up her sea, and make her springs dry." As the sea is the image of masses of people, the water of streams and of fountains represents happiness, prosperity, and fortune; comp. the Treatise on Balaam, at Num. xxiv. 6, 7. The *streams* in ver. 33 comprehend the surrounding country. On the second clause, comp. Deut. viii. 15, Is. xxxv. 7, to the latter of which passages allusion is made. It is there

said of Sion: "the parched ground shall become a pool." The state of matters in the *world* is being reversed.—Ver. 34 alludes to the great type of all the judgments upon the ungodly world, the destruction of Sodom and Gomorrha, the change of its fruitful territory into a salt sea and a salt soil on which nothing grows. Comp. Deut. xxix. 22, and Ez. ch. xlvii., where Sodom and Gomorrha appear as a type of the world throughout the whole of a symbolical picture. Babylon had already undergone the *beginning* of a great change, the *completion* of which was descerned by the eye of faith as revealed in the sure word of prophecy; comp., for example, Is. xiii. 19, "And Babylon, the beauty of kingdoms, the haughty ornament of the Chaldeans, shall be destroyed by God like Sodom and Gomorrha."—Ver. 35 is literally from Is. xli. 18, "I will make the wilderness a pool of water, and the dry land springs of water;" comp. xxxv. 7, "And the parched ground shall become a pool, and the thirsty land springs of water," xliii. 20, and, in opposition, the world, xlii. 15, "I will make the rivers islands, and I will dry up the pools." Allusion is made to the water which the Lord sent to his people in the wilderness, a type of the fountain of *salvation* which he opens at all times in the wilderness of misery. It is obvious, from what follows, that the wilderness here denotes the then miserable condition of Canaan.—The second portion of the strophe, which, when added to the preceding one, makes up seven verses, refers wholly to the prosperous change which had recently taken place in favour of the people of the Lord, or it continues the description which had been begun at the end of the first.—On ver. 36, comp. ver. 4, 5, 7.—The עשה in ver. 37 is *to make*, comp. Ps. lx. 12. The *increase* is the year's harvest, comp. Lev. xxv. 16.—The רבה in ver. 38 is not only to *increase*, in reference to the number of the people, but also to *improve, to prosper*, Deut, xxx. 16, comp. also ver. 41. The המעיט is from Lev. xxvi. 22.—In whatever way we may construe the future with Vau in ver. 39, it is, at all events, certain that this verse refers to the *mournful past*, and, by pointing to it, leads to a deeper consciousness of the prosperity of the present, and to more lively gratitude. The best way to translate is: and they were diminished, instead of they, the diminished and the sunk.—The first clause of ver. 40 is from Job xii. 21—the quotation is marked

by the circumstance that the participle there stands in a *string* of participles, while here it is the only one that occurs in the whole strophe—, the second from ver. 24th of the same chapter. The wandering in the desert without a way denotes, according to the fundamental passage, helpless embarrassment. Some expositors have erroneously applied to Israel what was intended for Babylon; and as the penalty of this mistake, they cannot understand why they should begin with the participle. Our verse corresponds to ver. 33, 34; and the opposite, the salvation of Sion, follows in ver. 41. The concluding verse, the 42d, exhibits the impression which this great turn of things, this change of condition, makes on both parties.—The expression, "like a flock," or "like sheep," ver. 41, denotes great multitudes; comp. Job xxi. 11, "They send forth their children like sheep." Whoever comes out of great misery is thankful even for such beginnings of salvation, as may be, for the first time, seen in the above description.—Israel is meant by the *righteous* in ver. 42; comp. at Ps. xxxiii. 1. The second clause is from Job v. 16. The *wickedness* here is heathen wickedness, wicked Babylon, with its associates, the sons of Edom, Ps. cxxxvii. 7. Oppressed herself by misery, she now shuts that mouth with which she had so long insulted God and his chosen ones.

In ver. 43 we have the conclusion of the whole.—*He who is wise understands this; and may men observe the mercies of the Lord!* An expressive *nota bene!* Heartfelt thanks for the past favours of the Lord form the indispensable condition of the *continuance* of these favours. He who does not give thanks is a fool, for he brings it about that clouds of wrath again collect over his head.[a]

Upon the cycle of ten and the cycle of seven Psalms there follows now one of twelve, introduced as in the preceding case by a Davidic trilogy, to which there are then added nine new Psalms.

a Calvin: By a question he indirectly reprobates a false opinion which prevails throughout the world to a great extent, while the most audacious despiser of God fancies himself very wise, as if he said that all the fools will be detected who do not exercise discernment in this matter.

PSALM CVIII.

The Psalmist, or rather the church of the Lord in whose name he speaks, expresses her firm confidence in her God, and praises him because of the fulness of his mercy and truth, ver. 2–6; entreats him to impart his salvation, and founds this prayer upon the firm ground of the word and promise of God by which Israel is assured of perpetual possession of his land, and victory over the neighbouring nations, ver. 7–10; and expresses, in looking at this promise, the hope that the expedition against Edom, about to be undertaken, may be brought to a prosperous termination, ver. 11–14.

The Psalm falls into three strophes, each of four verses, ver. 1–4, 6–9, 10–13, containing thus among them the significant number twelve. With the addition of the title and the doxology, which terminates the first strophe, ver. 5, there are in all fourteen verses. The name of God occurs in all seven times, and the seven is divided by a three and a four; in the first, or introductory part, Jehovah is between Elohim on each side, and in the second part Elohim occurs four times.

The first strophe is borrowed with alterations from Ps. lvii. 7–11, and the second and third from Ps. lx. 5–12. That these constituent portions of two Psalms are not put together as on an equal footing, but that we have before us rather a *variation* of the 60th Psalm of which the introduction is taken from another Psalm, is evident from the fact that the number of verses and also of strophes of four verses each which distinguished the 60th Psalm, is retained here. The title and the doxology in ver. 5 here correspond to the title of the 60th Psalm, which consists of two verses.

That this variation of the 60th Psalm proceeded from David is manifest from the title, "A Song of Praise, a Psalm of David," the originality of which is manifest from its connection with *I will sing and play*, ver. 1, from its being necessary to the formal organization of the Psalm, its addition being required to make the number of verses the same as that of Psalm lx. Besides, we have to add the analogy of all the other doubled Psalms; comp. at Ps. xiv., xviii., xl., lxx. In addition, it may be observed, that

while all the variations bear the marks of design, there does not occur a single one which could have been intended to adapt the Psalm to the relations of later times.

The object for which David made this variation may be ascertained from the most significant of the alterations, one around which the rest are merely clustered as associates. In room of the introductory strophe in the 60th Psalm, containing the acknowledgment of the deliverance already imparted, David desired to substitute the words with which he had on another occasion, on the most mournful event of his life, given expression to his confidence and joy in the time of Saul, because these words, so gloriously verified in their consequences, came from his heart; all the feelings which had belonged to that time were along with these words transferred to the present occasion.

David employed this variation of the 60th Psalm as an introduction to a trilogy which should represent the contest and the victory of Israel, and as immediately connected therewith, of Israel's family. In this connection the Psalm loses its original special reference: Edom becomes the type of the enemies of the kingdom of God and of David. Allusion is made to this disjunction of the Psalm from its immediate historical occasion by the omission of the title of Ps. lx., which announces the occasion at length and exactly.

This Davidic Psalm must have been very consolatory and elevating to the church at its return from the Babylonish captivity, when still weak and only in partial possession of the land, that, too, merely as a servant, and generally in a very depressed state in reference to the world around.

Title. Ver. 1–5.—Title. *A song of praise, a Psalm by David.* Ver. 1. *Firm is my heart, O God, I will sing praise and play, even my glory.* Ver. 2. *Wake up, harp and psaltery, I will awaken the morning.* Ver. 3. *I will praise thee among the nations, O Lord, and play to thee among the people.* Ver. 4. *For great from heaven is thy mercy, and even to the clouds thy truth.* Ver. 5. *Praise to thee, O God, in the heaven, and upon the whole earth glory to thee.*—In ver. 1, the second "my heart is fixed," of Ps. lvii. is left out. A skipping expression of joyful confidence like this was suitable only in connection with what went before. *Even my glory* shall sing praise to thee,

not only the *mouth*, but also the *soul*, whose praise is acceptable to God, because it is glory, comp. Ps. xxx. 12, ciii. 1, 5. In Ps. lvii., "wake up my glory." Those translations which differ from the above, are to be rejected on the ground that they are removed from the fundamental passage.—In ver. 4 there is a designed variation: instead of "even to heaven" in Ps. lvii., we have "down from heaven," in reference to "praise to thee in heaven," of ver. 5. The עַל denotes there the place where the Lord should be praised. He shall be praised in the heaven and upon the earth, because his mercy is made known down from heaven, מֵעַל, *desuper*, upon the children of men.

The expression of confidence grounded upon all that the church had hitherto experienced of the mercy of her God, is followed by the *prayer*, ver. 6–9, for the communication of salvation, founded upon the glorious promises which God had given her. Ver. 6. *In order that thy beloved may be delivered, help with thy right hand, and hear me.* Ver. 7. *God has spoken in his holiness, therefore will I shout for joy, divide Shechem and measure out the valley of Succoth.* Ver. 8. *Gilead is mine, Manasseh is mine, and Ephraim the strength of my head, Judah my lawgiver.* Ver. 9. *Moab is my washing pot, on Edom I cast my shoe, over Philistia I shall rejoice.*—In ver. 6, instead of "hear *us*," in Ps. lx., there stands, "hear me." It is the church of the Lord that speaks; both expressions, therefore, are in reality the same.—In the eighth verse the 60th Psalm has וְלִי, *and mine.*—In verse 9th the 60th Psalm has: *Philistia rejoice at me.* The expression here is not an *explanation* but a variation. The one flows from the other.

In the third strophe, ver. 10–13, we have the hope of assistance against Edom, grounded on the divine promises, and the prayer for the same. Ver. 10. *Who will bring me to the strong city, who conduct me to Edom?* Ver. 11. *Wilt not thou, O God, who hast cast us off, and "goest not forth, O God, among our armies."* Ver. 12. *Give us help against the enemy; and deceitful is human help.* Ver. 13. *In God we will do valiantly, and he will tread down our enemies.*—In ver. 10 we have the usual מִבְצָר instead of the rare מְצוּר.—In ver. 11 the אַתָּה is left out: (*will*) *not God* (*do it*); and then there is the sudden transition to the *address.*

PSALM CIX.

The formal arrangement of this Psalm is very simple. It consists of three strophes, each of ten verses, and a concluding verse which gives the sum of the whole. "The Lord stands at the right hand of the needy man that he may deliver him from those who condemn his soul." The ten is, according to the common rule, divided by a five.

In the first half of the first strophe, the Psalmist, after a short prayer, depicts the wickedness of his enemy; in the second half he prays that the appropriate punishment may fall upon him, in regard to his life, and in regard to his children. The first half of the second strophe invokes the divine annihilating energy upon his goods and his honour; the second half, corresponding to the first strophe, turns to the *cause* of this misery invoked upon him, and describes this as rooted in the divine justice, which recompenses like with like. As the two first strophes are occupied with judgments upon the wicked, with a formula at the end, formally shutting up the subject, the third is occupied with the deliverance of the miserable. The first half represents the greatness of his misery, and the second brings into view the divine assistance.

The situation is that of one who is in danger of losing his life by false accusations, one whom wicked enemies persecute to death by means of an unrighteous judgment; comp. especially ver. 16, 20, and the conclusion, ver. 31, which exactly describes the situation.

This situation, at the basis of which lie the relations of David, in the time of Saul, is to be strictly retained; comp. at Ps. lviii. It constitutes the individual physiognomy of the Psalm; and to destroy it would require much more attention to be paid to the exposition than has hitherto been done. Still it is to be admitted, if not in a figurative yet in an individualizing sense. The Psalm belongs, as is manifest from its destination to the public worship of God (*to the chief musician*), to those also whose lives are exposed to dangers arising from other causes.

The subject of the Psalm is the suffering righteous man; comp. ver. 31. The Psalm may be applied directly to *every individual* in this situation. But that it may be referred, even according to

the view of the Psalmist, also to the circumstances of the *people*, is obvious from its connection with Ps. cviii., in which the people of God are introduced speaking. That the Psalmist had before his eyes at the same time the *Davidic family*, and especially *Him* in whom that family was destined to reach its summit, that the Psalm, as it proceeds from David as situated in the time of Saul, has him also for its object (as he existed in his seed), can admit of no doubt, if we compare the *last* verse of the Psalm with the first, and also with the fifth of the cx. The points of contact are of such a kind that they leave no doubt as to the originality of the connection with each other of both Psalms, and moreover as to the fact that we have here before us, as in Ps. ci.–ciii., a Davidic trilogy of Psalms. *Here* we have the help of the Lord imparted to his anointed in trouble, and *there* it is the glory of the Lord made known after deliverance: here he stands at his right hand to deliver him from those who condemn his soul, there his address is, "Sit thou at my right hand."

This threefold reference of the Psalm has only the character of three *rays*, proceeding from the centre of the righteous man. The undeniable existence of this reference *here* throws a vivid light upon the other Psalms of David which describe the suffering righteous man; comp. at Ps. lxix., lxx., lxxi. The cii. Psalm in the preceding Davidic trilogy is analogous; for at first sight it seems destined only for the private use of the suffering righteous man; but in reality it serves another purpose.

The originality of the title which ascribes the Psalm to David, is confirmed by the corresponding titles of the two Psalms, between which the Psalm before us stands, and with which it is connected; by the brevity of the first verse, unexampled in the whole Psalms if the title be removed; by the number seven of the words of the first verse, corresponding to the seven divisions into which the Psalm falls, (six half strophes and a conclusion), divided as usually into a three and a four; the name Jehovah also, it may be noticed, occurs, in like manner, seven times, three times in the first (ver. 1–20), and four times in the second part. In favour of David being the author of the Psalm may be mentioned, besides the dependence of the Psalm upon the personal experience of David in the time of Saul, the view taken of the avenging justice of God, so characteristic of David, and also the fact, that the

Psalm throughout is nearly connected with the other Davidic Psalms, which refer to the suffering righteous man, and that it comes into contact also in individual expressions with the Davidic Psalms, and only with such (comp. the exposition), and also in ver. 17, with one expression of David's, as ascertained from the historical books.

The reasons which have been adduced against the Davidic authorship are of no force. A great deal of weight has been laid upon the "exaggerated imprecations," "history does not represent David as a man of this turn of mind, but rather of a magnanimous character." But it has been repeatedly shewn (last in the Introduction to Ps. lxix.), that the history represents David as also a person possessed of energetic faith in the avenging justice of God, and of lively desires for its execution; his magnanimity is so far from standing in opposition to this, that it is in this faith alone that it has its root. The assertion that the poetry is "too heavy and insipid for David," proceeds partly from a dislike to the *contents*, transferred to the form which these contents assume, and partly from the imperfection of the exegetical efforts that have been made in interpreting the Psalm. Sentence of condemnation has been passed, while no reason existed on which that sentence could rest. A more correct verdict on the poetical character of the Psalm is to be found in Amyraldus.[a]

The assertion of Grotius, "that there is nothing like this in the Gospels or in the Acts of the Apostles," overlooks the circumstance, that alongside of the prayer, "Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do," which does not stand in the least in contradiction to our Psalm (for it is with consummated wickedness that the Psalmist has to do), there stands, in the preceding context, the oft-repeated wo which the Lord denounced against the Pharisees, and also the threatening of the dreadful

[a] "I make bold, besides, to affirm, that the poet here exerted himself to the uttermost to compose a poem which should be the most eloquent of its kind. For he varies those his imprecations to such a great extent; some of them he sets forth under such a variety of forms, and with such different degrees of intensity; others he exhibits at such length and with such accuracy; he runs with care through all the topics which could furnish him with any thing bearing upon his purpose; finally, he considers in such a variety of ways the curse of God, lest there should be, as it were, any one form of it which he does not imprecate upon his abandoned foe, that I have no doubt whatever he took very particular pains to render his poem, in this respect, altogether perfect."

judgments upon Judas and Judah, which contain in them a *wish* as assuredly as the will of Christ is in accordance with the will of God; it overlooks also the expressions of Paul, "The Lord smite thee, thou whited wall," Acts xxiii. 3, and "Alexander the coppersmith did me much evil, the Lord reward him according to his deeds," 2 Tim. iv. 14.

Several expositors, giving up the *justification* of the Psalm, have in vain endeavoured to find out some *defence*. The Psalm is either edifying or it is injurious in its tendency; it is either holy or abominable. We hold decidedly by the former alternative, after the example of the Apostle who found in this Psalm a prophecy of Christ, Acts i. 20. The man who considers the view which lies at the basis of our Psalm as objectionable, robs suffering righteousness of one of the chief fountains of consolation, and takes away from wickedness the bit and the bridle: the use of our Psalm even in this point of view is usually overlooked. That what has a holy meaning may be made an unholy use of cannot be brought as a ground of charge against it.[a]

Title. Ver. 1–10.—Title. *To the Chief Musician, by David, a Psalm.* Ver. 1. *God my praise be not silent.* Ver. 2. *For they have opened the mouth of the wicked and the mouth of deceit against me, they speak with me with the tongue of lies.* Ver. 3. *And with words of hatred they surround me and fight against me without cause.* Ver. 4. *For my love they are my enemies and I am prayer.* Ver. 5. *And they shew me evil for good, and hatred for my love.* Ver. 6. *Place thou a wicked man over him, and let the enemy stand at his right hand.* Ver. 7. *When he shall be judged may he be found wicked, and may his prayer become sin.* Ver. 8. *May his days be few, may another take his office.* Ver. 9. *May his children become orphans, and his wife a widow.* Ver. 10. *May his children wander about and beg, and seek out of their ruins.*—"God, my praise,

[a] Calvin: Now as David did not speak except by the impulse of the Spirit, these imprecations are to be considered as if they were spoken by the voice of God from heaven. Thus, on the one hand, in denouncing vengeance, he wounds and restrains all our wicked desires of injuring others, and, on the other, moderates our grief by administering that consolation which will enable us to bear injuries. And because it is not yet given us to distinguish between the elect and the reprobate, let us learn to pray for all who trouble us, to wish salvation to the whole human race, anxious even for individuals. Meanwhile this need not hinder us, provided our minds are pure and calm, from freely appealing to the judgment of God, in order that all the desperate may be destroyed.

be not silent," in ver. 1, is: thou who hast always given me abundant occasion to praise thee, be not now silent, that I may have here also a similar opportunity; comp. ver. 30, "I shall praise the Lord exceedingly with my mouth, and in the midst of many I shall *extol* him." The praise denotes here the object of the praise, as it does in the fundamental passage, Deut. x. 21, "he is thy praise, and thy God who has done with thee this great and terrible thing which thine eyes behold;" comp. Ps. xxii. 3, 26, xliv. 8, and the dependent passage, Jer. xvii. 14, where it is recorded as the foundation of confidence of divine deliverance, "*for* thou art my praise." The presence of all that the Lord has already done for us, and the appeal to it, form a sure ground of answer, and a mighty quickening of hope. He cannot be unlike himself. On "be not silent," comp. Ps. xxviii. 1, xxxv. 22. God is here called upon not to be silent in view of the *words* of the enemies threatening destruction.—The subject in ver. 2 is, as always in what follows, "the enemies," "the wicked." It will not do to make the *mouth* the subject because פתח is always active. The *mouth* is that of the *wicked*, because they go forward by their *words* to *destroy* the miserable; and it is that of *deceit*, because, for the attainment of this object, they make use of false accusations, fictitious charges, to which also the expression "words with the tongue of lies," refers. The situation in Matth. xxvi. 59 corresponds exactly: "The high priests, and the elders, and the whole council sought false witness against Jesus that they might *put him to death*."—*The words of hatred*, in ver. 3, are malignant accusations. The נלחם with the accusative, only here, is *to contend with*. The swords with which they fight are their *tongues;* comp. Ps. lv. 21, lvii. 4. The language used in the Psalm refers only to false accusations, not to deeds. On "without a cause," comp. Ps. xxxv. 7, 19.—"For my love they are enemies to me," ver. 4, found its full truth in Christ. As the Psalmist in the whole paragraph describes how he is treated, not how he feels, the expression, "I am prayer," cannot mean, "I am quiet in it," "I do nothing else than pray," but only, "they treat me so wickedly, or matters have come to that extremity with me, that I am wholly prayer" (comp. I am peace, Ps. cxx. 7; "I cry wholly for help;" comp. on תפלה at Ps. xc. 1, and Ps. lxix. 13);

David was wholly prayer when he went forth over the Mount of Olives weeping, and with his head covered, 2 Sam. xv. 30. On the whole verse, and on ver. 5, comp. Ps. xxxviii, 20, xxxv. 12, 13.—The singular in ver. 6–19 refers, as it always does in similar cases, to the ideal person of the wicked. *Place over him* (comp. הפקד with אל, Gen. xxxix. 5, xli. 34), as his superior, and judicial authority for the righteous punishment of the shameful abuse of his judicial powers, his פקדה, ver. 8; comp. Is. lx. 17, 2 Chron. xxiv. 11;—comp. Ps. xli. 1, 2, where we find promised, deliverance in the day of distress from him who acts cunningly against the miserable, protection against the rage of enemies. The right hand comes into notice here not as the place which belongs to the accuser in a trial (comp. against this the Chris. p. ii. on Zech. iii. 1), but because, being the organ of *action*, it is the most suitable place for one to occupy, who is determined perseveringly to hinder or to assist another; comp. ver. 31, where the Lord stands at the right hand of the needy man. Ps. cx. 5 shows that the על לימין (Zech. iii. 1, Job xxx. 12) is here not what oppresses, what hinders the right hand from every exertion, paralyzes all efforts of the man laid hold of, but that it in reality resembles the לימין in ver. 31, the only difference being that the ימין denotes here, as it often does, the *right side*. That the passage before us is the one from which the name of Satan, first used in Job, has been derived (the name in the Pentateuch is Asasel,—comp. Egypt and the Books of Moses) is evident from the literal reference in which the verse before us stands to the *second* fundamental passage of Satan, Zech. iii. 1; the enemy of our Psalm, a Psalm in which שטן occurs more frequently than it does anywhere else, is the worthy representative, the visible emblem of the Evil One. Many expositors (Luther: And may Satan stand at his right hand) perceiving the connection of our Psalm with Job. i. and Zech. iii. 1, but not understanding the manner and way of that connection, consider the שטן here as a proper name of the Evil One. But Satan is not elsewhere introduced in the Psalm; and a reference to him cannot therefore be adopted on forced grounds. On the other hand, we have to urge the want of the article which cannot occur in the first passage which makes mention of Satan, and which occurs only in the last passage of the Old Testament in which Satan is spoken of, 1 Chron. xxi.;—terms which were originally appellatives, come in

the course of time to be used as proper names. The reference to what precedes leads to the idea of a *human* enemy; the Psalmist had suffered by human wickedness, ver. 2, and by human enmity, ver. 4, and the punishment therefore should come in the same way. The הִפָּקֵד shews, especially when the פְּקֻדָּתוֹ is compared, that it is the wicked and the enemies that are to be understood by the superiors set over.—The connection with ver. 6 shews that the language in ver. 7 refers to a *human* judgment (comp. Ps. xxxvii. 33, and the second clause), or if to a *divine* judgment, yet to such a one as is executed through the medium of the *wicked* and of the *enemy*, the unjust human judges; God's way is to punish the wicked by means of the wicked, and *unjust* decisions are as really under his control as just ones. We must supply: he who has condemned me unjustly, has condemned my soul without a cause; comp. ver. 31. *May he go forth,—out of the trial. May his prayer be sin,—in its results*, namely, increase his misery instead of granting him the deserved help; this is not a "shocking imprecation," but a prayer according to the will of God; for the prayer of the wicked uttered without faith and repentance can have no other effect than this, it originates in sin and therefore it can come to nothing but sin; comp. Prov. xxviii. 9, "he that turneth away his ear from hearing the law, even his prayer shall be abomination," Is. i. 15, Ps. lxvi. 17, and the passages quoted there.—In the expression, "may his days be few," in ver. 8 (מְעַטִים is not an adjective but a substantive, *fewnesses*), we have expressed as a *wish* what in Ps. lv. 23, "the men of blood and of deceit do not live out half their days," is expressed as a fact. We must suppose added: as he intended to have shortened *my* days. The פְּקֻדָּה always *oversight*, ἐπισκοπή, Acts i. 20, is the usual term for a superior office; and that this is the sense which it bears here is evident from the reference to פָּקַד in ver. 6: the individual in office who abused his office for wickedness, shall by a wicked superior be punished in body and life, and shall thus lose his office. We have in the whole half strophe a regular progression of thought: the wicked man is set over him, ver. 6, he is condemned, ver. 7, sentence is put in execution, and another succeeds to his office, ver. 8, then farther still, the punishment descends to his children, ver. 9, 10. The translation "his property" passes

into the territory of the next strophe.—On "may his sons wander up and down," ver. 10, comp. Ps. lix. 11, "let them wander by thy strength, *i.e.*, in their children; they are *put to death* themselves there also. On "and beg," compare Ps. xxxvii. 25. The object to the verb "seek" is easily supplied. *Out of their ruins*, where there is nothing but hunger and sorrow.

Ver. 11–20.—Ver. 11. *May the creditor catch all that he hath, and may strangers plunder his labour.* Ver. 12. *May he have no one who may shew him mercy, and may no one have compassion upon his orphans.* Ver. 13. *May his posterity be rooted out, and in the following generation may their name be blotted out.* Ver. 14. *Let the iniquity of his father be remembered by the Lord, and may the sins of his mother not be forgiven.* Ver. 15. *May they be continually before the Lord, and may he root out from the earth their remembrance.* Ver. 16. *Because he remembered not to shew mercy, and persecuted the poor and needy man, and the heart-broken, that he might put him to death.* Ver. 17. *And he loved cursing, and it comes upon him, and he had no pleasure in blessing, and therefore it is far from him.* Ver. 18. *And he puts on cursing like a garment, and therefore it comes like water into his inwards, and like oil into his bones.* Ver. 19. *May it be to him like the clothing which he has on, and a girdle which is always round him.* Ver. 20. *This is the reward of those who are enemies to me, from the Lord, and speak evil against my soul.*—In the half strophe, ver. 11–15, the Psalmist turns from the life of the wicked, and from his children, to his *property*, ver. 11, 12, and to his *name* and *memorial*, ver. 13–15. The prayers and wishes rest upon the living conviction that the divine justice is a fire which does not rest until it has *completely* and *entirely* consumed what it has seized upon. The Pi of נקשׁ in ver. 11 occurs in Ps. xxxviii. 12, in the sense of *to lay snares, to catch.* The *strangers* are in opposition to the members of the family, Deut. xxv. 5. The משׁך in ver. 12, as in Ps. xxxvi. 10, lxxxv. 5, *is to draw, to draw out to a length, to extend.* According to the connection and the parallel, the extending of mercy is specially the respite granted to the *debtor*. The חנן, *to be compassionate*, in Ps. xxxvii. 21, in connection with *giving*, Prov. xxviii. 8, דּוֹכן דלים, is *one who has pity in a way of charity upon the poor.*

The first clause of ver. 13, according to the parallel passages, Ps. xxxvii. 37, *for a futurity has the man of peace*, and ver. 38, *the futurity of the wicked is cut off*—comp. on אחרית never *posterity*, always *end*, at the passage—must be explained "may his futurity be rooted out, may he be violently robbed of futurity, to the extinction of his family and his name." The second clause depends upon Deut. xxix. 20, and the Lord shall blot out his name from under heaven," comp. Ps. ix. 8. The blotting out of the name follows the extinction of the *family*, comp. Deut. xxv. 6. *In another generation*, after it has existed in the first generation among hunger and ruin, comp. ver. 10. In the "*its* name," there lies a concealed plurality behind the unity. The *not being blotted out* of the 14th verse is the cause of the *being blotted out* of the 13th. The 15th verse renders it evident that it comes into notice only in this point of view, and that the Psalmist still goes on to speak of the extinction of the name and the remembrance. On the visiting of the guilt of the fathers on the children (of similar character) comp. the Beitr. 3, p. 544, ss. The fundamental passage is Ex. xx. 5. The unusual לפני = אל יהוה occurs in Num. x. 9; נגד in ver. 15 of the Psalm before us.—On ver. 15 comp. Ps. ix. 6, xxxiv. 16. Luther: "Remembrance in Scripture does not imply that one is remembered, otherwise Judas, Pilate, and Herod would be always held in remembrance, but that one is extolled, praised, that there is a good report of him."—The לא זכר in ver. 16 stands in reference to the יזכר of ver 14. *He persecuted the miserable man*, not "the poet and such as him," for every where in the Psalms the miserable is only one individual, but *me the miserable one*. The Psalmist strips off personality. The *misery* is not what is caused by others, but what is caused by the *wicked*. This is their guilt, that they will not cease by the sight of the misery of their victim, but are rather thereby instigated to *complete* their work; comp. at Ps. lxix. 26. The נכאה is the Part. Niph. of כאה, *to be struck down*, which root occurs also in Ps. x. 8, 10; it is allied to נכא, *to be struck*, comp. at Ps. xxxv. 15.—In ver. 17, several translate, "may it come," and "may it be far from him," and refer to the optatives in ver. 19. But this reason is not quite decisive. Declarations and wishes are much more intimately connected than the common exposition assumes that they are, which sees here nothing else

than arbitrary imprecations: the wish depends upon the state of existence, and grows out of it. And in this half strophe, which, as is manifest from the first verse, is intended to point out the judgments called down upon the wicked in his extremity, it is much more suitable that the form of declaration should be the prevailing one, and not that of wish. The optative construction, moreover, is altogether inadmissible. The fut. with the Vau Conv. never is, and cannot be, used as an optative. By "the curse" several understand the curse which strikes the wicked himself: the wicked loved this, inasmuch as he loved sin, which necessarily draws the curse after it; comp. Prov. viii. 36, "those who hate me love death." Others by the curse understand the curses which he utters against the miserable man. The 28th verse is decisive in favour of this latter view, "they curse, do thou bless;" so is 2 Sam. xvi. 12, where David, when Shemei curses him, says, "Perhaps the Lord will look upon my evil (the evil which has befallen me), and will requite me good for my cursing." The same remark may be made of the *blessing*.—In the second clause of ver. 18, allusion is made to the waters of cursing, which were given to those accused of adultery to drink, for the purpose of symbolizing the thoroughly pervading power of the curse; Num. v. 22, "And this water that causeth the curse shall go into thy bowels," comp. ver. 24, 27. The figure employed here depends upon the symbol made use of here. *Water*, internally, stands in direct opposition to the *garment* surrounding the body externally; oil applied to the exterior, and also operating internally, stands as it were in the middle.—The point of resemblance between the curse and the clothing in ver. 19, is, as the תמיד of the second clause shews, the continuance of it; and is thus different from that of the *garment* of ver. 18.—Ver. 20 contains the *epiphoneme;* comp. Is. xvii. 14, liv. 17. On "of those who are enemies to me," comp. ver. 4; on "who speak wickedness," ver. 2, 3. *Against my soul*,—who wish to take me, comp. "to put me to death," in ver. 16, 31, and the recompense in ver. 8, Ps. xxxi. 13, xl. 14, liv. 4, therefore *those who seek to murder me by wicked accusations.*

Ver. 21–31.—Ver. 21. *And do thou, Jehovah, Lord, for me for thy name's sake; because thy mercy is good, deliver thou me.* Ver. 22. *For I am miserable and poor, and my heart is*

pierced within me. Ver. 23. *I must go hence like the shadow when it declineth, I am carried away like the locust.* Ver. 24. *My knees are weak through fasting, and my flesh deceives from want of oil.* Ver. 25. *I am become a reproach to them, they see me, they shake the head.* Ver. 26. *Help me, O Lord my God, deliver me according to thy mercy.* Ver. 27. *And may it be known that this is thy hand, thou, Lord, hast done it.* Ver. 28. *They curse, bless thou; they rise up, may they be ashamed; but may thy servant rejoice.* Ver. 29. *May my adversaries be clothed with shame, and may they be covered in their own disgrace as in a mantle.* Ver. 30. *I will praise the Lord very much with my mouth, and in the midst of many I will sing praise to him.* Ver. 31. *For he stands at the right hand of the needy man, that he may deliver him from those who condemn his soul.*—*And do thou,* ver. 21,—My only helper against those who speak against my soul. At " do to me," the object is wanting :—several falsely : " act towards me,"—עֲשֵׂה only means *to make, to do,* never, *to act;* it is to be supplied here as in 1 Sam. xiv. 6, " perhaps the Lord will do to us," from the common phrases " to do *mercy,*" or " to do *good* to any one :" this may be done much more easily here than in 1 Sam. xiv. 6, because the thing to be supplied is in reality contained in the clause, " for thy name's sake :"—*do to me for thy name's sake what is suitable to thy name, to thy historically manifested mercy.* Ps. cxix. 124 is exactly similar, " do to thy servant (mercy) for thy mercy's sake;" and Jer. xiv. 7, " though our sins testify against us, do thou Lord for thy name's sake (the work of thy name)." On the second clause comp. Ps. lxiii. 3, and especially Ps. lxix. 16. The prayer here, reversing the order in the first clause *precedes* its basis : " because good is thy mercy," being an explanation of " thy name's sake."—The first clause of ver. 22 is literally from Ps. xl. 17, comp. lxix. 29. *My heart is pierced within me,*—by the sword of pain; comp. ver. 16, Ps. lv. 4, " my heart trembles within me," in deep pain, sore anguish.—On the first clause of ver. 23 comp. Ps. cii. 11, " my days are like a shadow that declineth," like one about to disappear. The declining shadow occurs only in these two passages. The Niph. of נָטָה (a verb which properly has no Niph.) which occurs only in this passage, denotes a suffering, a forced going. The

locusts, when the wind seizes them, are irresistibly carried off, and disappear without leaving a trace behind; comp. Ex. x. 19, Joel ii. 20, Nah. iii. 17. Such comparisons of the sufferer to small helpless creatures are peculiarly characteristic of David; comp. here Ps. cii. 7, xi. 1, lvi. 1. The *fasting* in ver. 24 is never used of that want of eating which proceeds from want of appetite (as Maurer here: inedia ex aegritudine), but always of the exercise of penitence as practised by men when overwhelmed or when threatened with severe sufferings; comp. Gesen. in the Thes., and at Ps. lxix. 10, xxxv. 13. The Psalmist had already, in his deep and long-continued misery, fasted himself thin and weak. The flesh *deceives* when, while it is in the best possible condition, it becomes *invisible* = *not shining*, not through emaciation, but because it is not attended to. The expression is similar to *ἀφανίζουσι τὰ πρόσωπα ἀυτῶν, they make their faces invisible, not shining*, Matth. vi. 16. Comp. כזב, *to lie*, used of waters that sink into the ground in Is. lviii. 11, and בגד, *to be faithless*, applied to a brook dried up, Job vi. 15. The מן in משמן is not to be construed in a privative but in a causal sense, as is obvious from the corresponding word מצום. The expression "from oil" is an abrupt expression instead of "from want of oil." The *fasting* makes the knees weak by its *presence*, and the oil makes the flesh not like what it should be by its *absence*. The common translation is, "my flesh is deficient in fatness;" Gesenius: "deficit a pinguedine, contabescit, emaciatur." But against this we may urge, first, the שמן always means *oil, ointment*, even in Is. x. 27, never, as Gousset has acknowledged, on דשן, *fat;* it occurs in the sense of *oil, ointment*, in ver. 18; and a special reason for taking it in this sense in the passage before us arises from the usual contrast between the anointing with oil (comp. Deut. xxviii. 20, and Mich. vi. 15) and mourning and fasting; comp. 2 Sam. xiv. 2, "Mourn, and put on thy mourning apparel, and anoint not thyself with oil," 2 Sam. xii. 20, "and David rose up from the earth, and washed himself, and anointed himself," and also the 16th verse of the same chapter, "And David sought God because of the child, and David *fasted*, Matth. vi. 16, 17." 2. The כחש never signifies *to take away, to become lean*, but always *to deceive;* Job xvi. 8, the only passage to which an appeal has been made, is not to be translated "my *leanness* rises against me,"

but my *deceit*, the *hypocrisy*, of which by my sufferings I am apparently convicted. 3. The מן in משמן must be taken causally in accordance with מצום.—On the first clause of ver. 25, comp. Ps. xxii. 6, xxxi. 11. *And I*,—in this miserable condition, who ought rather to be an object of sympathy. On the second clause, comp. Ps. xxii. 7. The *shaking* of the head is there, as it is here, a denial of the existence of the sufferer, a declaration that his state is completely desperate.—On ver. 27, comp. Ps. lix. 13, "Annihilate them that they may no longer exist, and that it may be known that God is ruler in Jacob even to the ends of the earth." Men *may know* (and thus learn to fear thee) that this my deliverance is *thy hand*, a work of thy hand, which exhibits the stupidity of the ungodly strengthened as it is in them by their exemption from punishment, as *feebleness*.—That in ver. 20 we cannot translate, "may they curse," but only "they curse," = "though they curse," is manifest from the קמו. On "thy servant," compare Ps. xix. 11, xxvii. 9.—On ver. 29 compare Ps. lxxi. 13. It is a resumption from ver. 18 for the purpose of placing it alongside of the salvation of the servant of God with which alone this strophe is concerned. The comparison of the *garment*—מעיל a *long robe*, ποδήρης according to Josephus—intimates that they are to be covered with shame from head to foot.—On ver. 30, compare Ps vii. 17 (also the conclusion of the Psalm), ix. 1, xxxiv. 1, lxix. 30. On the second clause Ps. xxii. 22. The preceding prayers rise on the ground of the confidence. The promise of thanks is very appropriately added to these.—On ver. 31 comp. ver. 6, Ps. xvi. 8. On "his soul," ver 20.

PSALM CX.

Luther calls this Psalm "the true high main Psalm of our beloved Lord Jesus Christ;" our Lord himself attests that it was composed in the Holy Ghost; and there is no other passage of the Old Testament so frequently quoted or echoed in the New.

Title. *By David a Psalm.* Ver. 1. *The* LORD *says to my Lord: sit at my right hand, till I make thy enemies thy footstool.* Ver. 2. *The Lord will send thy powerful rod of Sion,*

rule in the midst of thine enemies. Ver. 3. *Thy people free-will gifts in thy day of might, in holy beauty; out of the womb of the morning—heaven, to thee thy youth-dew.* Ver. 4. *The Lord has sworn and will not repent: thou art a priest for ever after the order of Melchisedec.* Ver. 5. *The Lord at thy right hand smites kings in the day of his wrath.* Ver. 6. *He shall judge among the heathen, fill with dead bodies, smite heads on the wide earth.* Ver. 7. *From the brook he shall drink in the way, therefore he shall lift up the head.*

The seven verses of the Psalm fall into two strophes, consisting, according to the usual division of the seven in the Psalms, the one of four and the other of three verses. The first strophe represents the foundation of the victory of the Anointed; and falls into two members, each of two verses. The offspring of David sits at the right hand of the Lord, partner of the might and the dominion of the Almighty, therefore he will make easy work with his enemies, ver. 1, 2; the offspring of David has a people which offers itself willingly to the Lord; a holy people to whom victory cannot be wanting is given him from above; for he is, according to the sure divine purpose, not only *king* but also a *priest* for ever according to the order of Melchisedec, and as such purifies his people from their sins. A double ground of hope is hence furnished to us. The first is the sitting of the Anointed at the right hand of God; the second, the *people* of the Anointed: this last, however, is not a human but a divine ground of hope. For the people is only what it is through the true *priest* which God has given it; the proper foundation therefore of the victory next to the true kingly power of the Anointed to whom all power in earth and heaven has been given, is his true *priesthood.*—As the first strophe describes the foundation of the victory, the second describes the *victory* itself. We see how the Lord by his Anointed, and the Anointed with the help of the Lord, overthrows the enemies with irresistible power.

At the beginning, ver. 1, and at the end, ver. 6 and 7, David speaks of the Anointed; and in the middle he speaks to him. In the first strophe the verses have a festive length; the description of the victory moves on in short clauses, like the rapid victory itself.

The Psalm was composed by David when the seat of govern-

ment and the ark of the covenant were brought to Mount Zion. This is evident from ver. 2, according to which the Lord extends the kingdom of his Anointed from Zion, and from the mention of Melchisedec, the royal priest of Salem, as the type of the union of royalty and the priesthood in the Anointed, in ver. 4. David, further, must already have been in possession of the promise made to him according to 2 Sam. vii. by Nathan, of the eternal duration of his seed; for this forms the basis of the Psalm. The Psalm *finally* represents the triumphant termination of the *wars* of David, particularly the severest of them all, the Aramean-Edomitic and the Ammonitic-Aramean; for these victories form the terminating point of the Psalm.

The expectations and claims made by the servants of the true and living God are from the beginning *wide* and *all comprehensive*. The servants of the true God are not at all satisfied with a limited part; but they claim for their God and his kingdom, just because he is the true God, God in the full sense, the Creator and Lord of the whole world, the whole earth in its remotest extent; and they make this claim with a decision and hold it with a tenacity, which must surprise all who do not know their real reasons. *Abraham* even in the days of old had the nations of the whole earth in his eye, and the blessing to be brought to them by his seed formed the centre of his hopes. Jacob saw Shiloh coming from the tribe of Judah, whom the nations obey. Everywhere onward, wherever there is living faith, we find also claims to the dominion of the world. During the preceding and at the beginning of the present century it was one of the most mournful signs of the decay of the Church that believers were contented if they were only not disturbed in their own little corner. Expectations, claims, and efforts, wide as the world, arose along with the revival of faith. It was thus that David, notwithstanding his glorious victories and the elevation of the people of God above what had ever been known in former days, was not content with this *corner-dominion*. It served only to give a new impetus to his world-wide claims and expectations. But at the same time he perceived that there could be no fulfilment of these hopes in the *ordinary* way. Even with the mighty help of her Lord, a King *like himself* could have no prospect of ever being able completely to subjugate the power of the world, which like a wall of brass opposed the progress of

the kingdom of God; this must be reserved for a King whose throne was withdrawn from earth to heaven, and who participated in divine omnipotence. *A people*, moreover, such as that of David, was not fitted to bring the holy war against the world to a thorough termination; it wanted the spirit of entire devotedness and surrender to the Lord; it wanted the holy dress necessary for the soldiers of the Lord; and David and any one like him were not able to give this: its root lies in reconciliation and the forgiveness of sin, which one sinner cannot impart to another. Still, David was not wrong in his hopes because of these apparently insuperable difficulties which opposed their fulfilment. He had received from God the sure promise of the eternal dominion of his race; he who was a prophet, Acts ii. 30, by whom, as he himself says in 2 Sam. xxiii. 2, the Spirit of the Lord spake, and on whose tongue the word of the Lord was, knew that this promise would reach its height in the *Messiah*, of whom there had been spread abroad some dark information from a remote antiquity. When he now drew near to God, at the holy moment to which our Psalm owes its origin, with "receive the prayer of our distress," it was revealed to him in Spirit—for he speaks here in the spirit, according to the express declaration of our Lord—that in this his offspring, who at the same time is his *Lord*, these difficulties would come to an end. He shall sit at the right hand of Omnipotence and be a priest for ever, and therefore shall raise his people to the sovereignty of the world.

It may well fill us with deep shame when we see how believers under the Old Testament prepared for themselves, out of what the Lord had already done, ladders, on which they rose freshly and joyfully to comprehensive hopes (we are too much inclined to despise small beginnings), how David simply brought all his doubts to God, and how he laid hold of the word of God with triumphant joy and immoveable firmness,—he who was sent entirely alone to this word, while the *Scheblimini* and the "*Thou art a priest for ever*" have been verified to us for eighteen hundred years. "He clings to it," says Luther, "with such firm faith, what he does not see he apprehends with such power of mind, and it is so sure to him, that he speaks of it as if he saw it already fulfilled before his eyes, and thus talks of it with a joyful rejoicing spirit, while his heart burns and overflows with joy towards the Lord Christ."

Who is the man who, with such an example before his eyes, ought not to feel ashamed of doubts, mourning, and lamentations when the billows of the world again break with power against the rocks of the church.

In accordance with the special point from which the Psalm sets out, the Psalm treats of only one view of the announcement of the Messiah, *Christ, as ruler over his enemies;* and, in like manner, this point exerts its influence upon the form in which the victory of the offspring of David over his enemies is celebrated,—a form which occurs elsewhere even in the New Testament, in the Apocalypse. It is a matter of indifference to us how far David recognised this form as such. It is not possible to suppose him to have been completely ignorant of it; for a king who is at the same time a *high priest*, who reconciles his people, and who is followed by his people to the battle in holy attire, can be no common warrior.

Full explanations of the form were unnecessary; it was enough in the first instance to know *that* it *was* to be; history must tell *how*.

The *address of God*, the revelation in ver. 1, is only *in point of form* directed to David's *Lord*—it is David himself who receives it. Jo. Arnd: "I, says the prophet David, heard God our heavenly father speak with his dear Son, and because it was a glorious royal speech which I would fain all the world should hear, I have recorded it in this Psalm." David calls his offspring *his Lord*, not merely in his own name but in that of the whole church of God; it is as the mouth of the church that he here speaks, and hence the explanation of the fact that our Lord in all the three Evangelists says David called him Lord, not *his* Lord. This mode of speech leads to the idea, as our Lord shows in arguing against the Pharisees, that David recognized in his offspring something altogether more than human. Its explanation and basis are to be found in the mighty word *Schebli·mini*, with which, according to Luther's expression, David leads and lifts Christ once for all from earth above all heavens. The throne of God, at the right hand of which the Anointed is to sit, is "the throne high and lifted up" of Isaiah, ch. vi., to which David in his own troubles, and in those of the Church, had so often directed his eye, Ps. ix. 7, lxviii. 18, xxix. 10 (comp. Ps. ii. 4, xi. 4), the symbol of his dominion over heaven and earth, and

every thing in them; comp. Ps. ciii. 19, "the Lord has prepared his *throne* in heaven, *and his kingdom ruleth over all.*" *The right hand* of the mighty is the symbol of his might. Therefore earthly sovereigns allow those whom they desire to constitute partakers of their sovereignty, to sit at the right hand of their throne. Thus Solomon set his mother at his right hand; in her case the participation in sovereignty was only *ideal;* she reigned *in* her son, not next to him or *in his name.* This place, however, was occupied altogether in a peculiar manner, by those who hold an office of great antiquity in the East, that namely of the representative of royalty, who was invested with full kingly rank and power. This office was held by Joseph in Egypt, whom we find Pharaoh thus addressing, "Thou shalt be over my house, and according to thy word shall all my people be ruled, only in the throne will I be greater than thou: behold, I set thee over the whole land of Egypt: without thee no one shall lift up hand or foot in the whole land of Egypt," Gen. xli. 40-44: he sits in Pharaoh's chariot, and the proclamation is made before him; *Bow the knee.* It was this rank that Salome claimed for one of her sons in the Redeemer's kingdom of glory, when taking occasion of the remark of Christ, that the twelve apostles should sit next his glorious throne, on twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel, she came to him and said, "Grant, that these my two sons may sit in thy kingdom, the one on thy right hand and the other on thy left hand," Matth. xix. 28. He who is invested with this honour by the Lord of heaven and earth, he whom he calls to sit at the right hand of his throne, and thus proclaims as his vicegerent and representative, is thereby elevated far above every human condition, and is invested with full participation in divine power over heaven and earth, as our Lord interpreting the *Schebhimini* declared to be the case with himself before he left the earth. This *Schebhimini* is infinitely rich in consolation for the Church of God at all times; and the man who lets this *one* word get into his heart, is removed from all pain and all sorrow,—it is all one to him whether his enemies are few or many, he looks with serene smiles upon their tumults and their vain attempts. He says with Arnd: "I know one who sits at the right hand of God; and he is strong enough for my enemies and for all my misfortune. He sits on my account at the right hand of God to protect me." The

word is all the more full of comfort, as Christ not only sits at the right hand of God for himself, but also raises his people to the same place with him, even now in time, and more gloriously still in eternity, as John says in the Apocalypse: "To him that overcometh will I grant to sit down with me on my throne, as I overcame and sat down with my father on his throne;" and Paul, 2 Tim. ii. 12, "If we suffer, we shall also reign with him." But that sitting of Christ at the right hand of God is still a *concealed* thing. It is only some one like Stephen, full of the Holy Ghost, who sees the heaven open and the Son of Man sitting at the right hand of God. The *Schlebimini*, first given to the Church by revelation, can be known to be true, and can be carried home to the heart only by revelation. He who sits at the right hand of the Father wields his power *unobserved*, so that it can be perceived only by faith. This is the case in order that believers may be exercised in faith, and that the world in righteous retribution for its unbelief towards him may run on to its own destruction. "What think you," says Luther, "should this poor, weak, beggar-king do with his miserable, naked, defenceless crowd? His enemies run so full of confidence upon him, and rage at him with all their power, so that at first it seems as if they would push him from his throne. But take care of yourself,—though he seems to be very weak, and God winks at it, as if he saw and could do nothing. For now he is upon them, he will destroy them when they are in their best thoughts and in their highest power; and in the midst of their work he will cast the dice and turn all things upside down with them, so that they shall suddenly be found lying on the ground ere they have time to look around them; and he will so deal with them that at the very moment when they are running at him and raging at them, they themselves shall run away and fall, and thus be overwhelmed and made his footstool at the very moment when they were intending to overthrow him and put him beneath their feet."—*The Lord shall sit at the right hand of God until he makes his enemies his footstool*,—subjugates them entirely, not so as if he sat quiet and looked idly on; but, on the contrary, every thing decidedly represents him overthrowing them himself, clothed with omnipotence. As the possession of divine omnipotence in "sit at my right hand," is given to the king only for the one definite

object set before us throughout the whole Psalm, viz., *the contest against the enemies;* the "until" is to be understood as excluding this. It is deserving of notice, that, as soon as we hear of *Christ* in the Old Testament, we hear also of his *enemies*, just as in the days of his flesh we see him everywhere surrounded by enemies, and engaged in contest with them. This serves as an evidence against those who would derive all the enmity of the world against Christ from the conduct of his servants; it shews that we should not feel surprised if, for the present, we see such hostility growing stronger and stronger, that we should consider it as quite a natural thing that we must *suffer* from this enmity, and that we can attain to peace only when, after a protracted and severe struggle, we participate in the victory of Christ. It is painful to be engaged in this conflict; but it cannot be otherwise, as the world "lieth in wickedness."—The second verse merely developes a consequence from the first. If the Lord has said to his Anointed, in presence of his enemies, "sit at my right hand," he must necessarily stretch forth his punishing hand as far as that enmity extends. This *rod* is the symbol, not of *government*, but of *victory* over *resistance;* it is the instrument by which the adversaries are punished; it corresponds to the sharp two-edged sword which, according to Rev. i. 16, proceeds out of the mouth of the Son of Man. The Lord will *send this rod* out of Sion, the ancient seat of the royal family of David, which reached its height in the Anointed, in order that, wielded by his mighty hand, it might wheel round among the enemies, and strike them to the ground. The "rule thou" is, in its connection with ver. 1, an exhortation; but it really contains in it a *prophecy*. *In the midst of thine enemies*,—not at all in some corner of them; the enemies are round on every side, but Christ, in the midst of them, rules in every direction.—Ver. 3 and 4 are, like ver. 1 and 2, bound together as one pair. The comfort which the omnipotent kingdom of the Lord imparts to the people of God, in view of a hostile world, is here accompanied, side by side, by that drawn from his *eternal priesthood*, which secures for them the forgiveness of sins, and, as rooted in this, the spirit of willing surrender and dedication, and the possession of holy garments, which are necessary for the holy contest. While verse first contains the ground, and verse second the consequence, the

Lord has said, " sit thou at my right hand," &c., " *therefore* the Lord shall send," &c., the order is here inverted, " thy people, willing gifts," &c., " *for* the Lord has sworn." The Psalmist wished the *people* of the Lord to stand directly over against his *enemies*. The king has not only *enemies*, but he has also *subjects*, such subjects as, from their very nature, carry along with them a security for victory, not in consequence of any innate excellence, but from a divine cause; their king is, at the same time, the true *high priest*. The *people* of the king denote his *subjects*, not in and for themselves, his *warriors*. But, in seasons of danger, all subjects are also warriors; and it is in this view alone that they came into notice in this warlike Psalm; " he is a bad servant who dares to stand still when he sees the general advancing." The נדבה has only the sense *of free-will gifts;* and it is the usual term for free-will gifts offered to the Lord. The Lord is also here the receiver; the Anointed is the priest by whose mediation they are brought to the Lord. Such free-will offerings were brought by Israel to the Lord at the erection of the tabernacle, which was entirely built out of such gifts. " Speak," thus said the Lord at that time to Moses, (Ex. xxv. 2), " to the children of Israel, that they bring to me *free-will offerings*, from every man whose heart inclines him, ye shall take my offering." After the erection of the tabernacle, full opportunity was afforded by the law to grateful spirits to present such offerings. But while there the gifts consisted of *things*, which were offered by persons, in the passage before us, the persons offer themselves as free-will gifts. They dedicate and offer themselves to God through their high priest on the day of battle for life and death without any reserve. This offering takes place on the king's *day of power*. The day of battle—this is what is meant—is at the same time for him the day of power. The king, who sits at the right hand of God, and who marches forward at the head of a people who willingly offer up themselves, must, when he fights, necessarily *conquer*. But this people who willingly offer up themselves in the day of battle can be known only by the eye of faith; and that faith is a more difficult thing than faith in the king at the right hand of God; just as *I believe in a holy Catholic church* is the most difficult article of the creed. The matter here is to discover the willing

offering of the heart concealed under the surface of timidity, indolence, and unwillingness, to be able, in confidence in the eternal High Priest appointed by God, to believe and hope that the future shall more and more bring to pass what has been very much wanting in the past, and at the same time to continue earnest in believing prayer, that the offering up of the spirit on the part of the people of God may become more real.—The second half of the verse is to be explained: the youthful soldiers of the king resemble in their holy attire the dew in beauty, like which they unexpectedly present themselves. *Holy attire,*—the *priests* put on holy attire when they did duty in the sanctuary, in anticipation of "be ye renewed in the spirit of your minds, and put on the new man, which after God is created in righteousness and holiness," Eph. iv. 23, 24,—a maxim intended to ring in the ears of every one who draws near to the holy God. The combatants are here clothed in holy attire, because the contest is no ordinary one; it is one in which it is necessary to put off the old man with his works, and in which not one thing even can be done by those who go forward in the spotted garments of the flesh; "it is a bearing of the cross, a holy warfare," where those only are admitted to the honour of the battle who go forward in holy garments, the symbol of holy hearts, the dress suitable to the chosen generation, the royal priesthood, the holy people, Ex. xix. 6, 1 Pet. ii. 9. In this holy attire *the youth-dew of the king* appears, his youthful dew, his youthful soldiery, who in their holy garments resemble the dew in beauty. The soldiery of the king consists in part of old grey warriors, but the spirit of youth is common to them all; and therefore the whole army presents to the Psalmist a youthful appearance. "Those who wait upon the Lord renew their strength, they mount up on wings as eagles, they run without being wearied, they walk without fainting." It is the service of the Lord *alone* that guarantees strength. This youth dew comes to the king "from the bosom of the morning-heaven." In this it is implied, to use the words of Luther, "that it is with the birth of the children of this kingdom as it is with the lovely dew, which falls in spring every day early in the morning, and no man can say how it is made, or where it comes from, still it lies there every morning upon the grass."—The youthful soldiers of the king are indebted for the willing spirit and the holy garments to his appointment to be a

priest for ever after the manner of Melchisedec: for *the Lord has sworn and will not repent,* thou art not only a king, thou art also a *priest after the manner of Melchisedec*, who in days of old united in Sion the royal and the priestly office. The office of *the high priest* consisted in mediating between God and the people; and this duty is performed agreeably to the condition of the latter by obtaining the forgiveness of sins through offerings and intercessions. As the mediation of the high priest consisted chiefly in obtaining reconciliation and the forgiveness of sins, these come particularly into notice in Lev. xvi., where we have a description of the ceremonies which took place on the great day of atonement, on which were concentrated the main duties of the office of high priest. David felt his weakness painfully on this point. He might indeed by his transgression *bring judgment upon the people* (2 Sam. xxiv. 17), but he could not effect reconciliation; safety therefore in the field against enemies could never be perfect. He knew that even a king at the right hand of God was not sufficient for the necessities of the people of God. A *holy people* might indeed be sufficiently cared for by him; but a *sinful people* can only be sure of victory, if their king is at the same time also a high priest. The discourse of the Lord is in reality addressed to this people, although in point of form to the Anointed. "I swear to you poor sinners"—thus Jo. Arnd gives correctly the sense—"that for your comfort I have ordained and given this my Son to be your high priest, who shall reconcile you and bless you." A people offering themselves freely to the Lord, in holy garments, a king at their head, who is at the same time a priest set apart by God himself to that office for all eternity, expiating whatever of sin cleaves to them, interceding, mediating, procuring the most intimate communion between them and God,—how is it possible that victory against the world should fail to be obtained even though the world rise against them with all its might?

The description of the victory itself follows in the second strophe this allusion to the presence of all the foundations of victory. The address is in ver. 5, as in the whole Psalm, directed to the king and high priest. As surely as he *sits at the right hand of the Lord,* so surely must the Lord stand at *his right hand* in the day of the mighty conflict, as his omnipotent helper and ally, and so surely must the enemies be destroyed by him,

mighty kings no less than the feeblest and the smallest; for in view of omnipotence, human might is only a section of feebleness. "He strikes kings in the day of his wrath," deeply affected the heart of Luther: "Thus," he says, "as I rather think from this prophecy, it will be some day with Germany, so that it shall be said, there lies beloved Germany destroyed and depopulated. For they will bring it about that God will act towards them the same part that he acted towards Rome and Jerusalem. God grant that we and our children may then be dead and not see this misery." This anticipation was once fulfilled when they sang: "May the lands depopulated, the churches destroyed by war and fire, be again restored." God grant that it may not be fulfilled a second time.—That we cannot in ver. 6 translate with Luther, "he shall smite the head over great lands," which many interpreters apply to Antichrist, but only, "he smites the heads over the wide earth," is evident, besides other reasons, from the manifest contrast between smiting the head of the enemies, and lifting up that of the king and high priest.—The figure of the *brook* out of which the king shall drink *in the way*, in the course of the contest and the victory, ver. 7, is explained by the history of Samson. Samson, after he had slain a thousand Philistines with the jaw bone of an ass, was very thirsty, and cried unto the Lord and said: "Thou hast given this great deliverance unto the hand of thy servant; and now I shall die for thirst, and fall into the hands of the uncircumcised: then God clave the hollow place that was in Lehi, and there came out water, and he drank, and his spirit came back, and he revived; wherefore he called the name of it, *The well of him that called*, which is at Lehi unto this day." "Our Samson, the beloved warrior," is not like his type subject to fatigue, as sure as he sits at the right hand of Omnipotence: but people drink from the fountain not only to quench thirst, but also to remain exempt from thirst; and the service rendered by such a brook is performed for him by that divine strength always flowing in to him which secures him against fatigue in the hottest conflict. His *servants*, however, and *warriors*, are oftened fatigued in the way, and cry out with Samson of old, "I shall now die with thirst, and fall into the hands of these uncircumcised." But the same fountain which secures the captain against fatigue, strengthens his soldiers in the endurance of fatigue, and supports them so

that they can lift up their head along with their captain. What is wanting to *the enemies* of the Lord, is the brook in the way, "the well of him that calleth." But he to whom this well is given cannot give way to despair, though he may at times be mournful and *hang his head.* The clause at the conclusion, "therefore he shall lift us his head," corresponds to that at the commencement, "sit thou at my right hand." Such a beginning can be followed only by such an end. The warrior lifts up his head in triumph after all his enemies have been cast down to the ground; "and his soldiers shout victory, and proclaim him to be a hero who keeps field and heart." This shall happen, in the most glorious manner, when the blessed and joyful day shall dawn, on which it shall be proclaimed: "the kingdoms of this world have become the kingdom of our Lord and of his Christ, and he shall reign for ever and ever," Rev. xi. 15. "But may God help us," —to conclude with the words of Luther—"to remain with this Lord, and to be found thankful to him, and to sing this Psalm to him with right faith and joy. To this our beloved Lord and Saviour alone be praise, glory, and honour, along with the Father and the Holy Ghost, one God, for ever. Amen."

Having given this general exposition of the Psalm, we would now subjoin some explanations and additions on particular points. First by way of *Introduction.*

The composition of the Psalm by David is attested by the title. This attestation is confirmed by the circumstance, that a Davidic trilogy of Psalms is, with manifest design, placed at the head of the dodecade, like a commanding citadel; by the *connection* which subsists between the Psalm and the two preceding ones attributed in the titles to David; and finally by our Lord, whose whole train of reasoning grounded upon our Psalm, Matth. xxii. 41–46, Mark xii. 35–37, Luke xx. 41–44, depends upon the fact of the Psalm having been composed by David. The internal reasons corroborate these external ones. The courageous, fresh, *warlike* tone, leads us to the hero David, to whom alone, of all the authors of the Psalms, this tone is peculiar. At the foundation of this Psalm are to be found lying the relations of David's time, David's wars and victories. Its intimate connection with Ps. ii. is also in favour of its having been composed by David. This is *denied* only by those to whom its admission would be un-

pleasant, on account of the resistance which it makes to their preconceived hypothesis in regard to exposition. The attempt to weaken, in part, the testimony of the title, by translating לדוד by *de Davide*, is altogether a vain one. In the titles of the Psalms this expression can occur only in one sense.

That the king and high priest of our Psalm is *Messiah*, was universally acknowledged among the ancient Jews: their testimony in favour of this is a national one. We see this so fully from the passages quoted above from the New Testament, that any other proof is altogether unnecessary. The Messianic character of the Psalm our Lord assumes as a fact universally admitted, and makes it the basis of all his reasonings; and his opponents never think of denying it for the purpose of evading the conclusions which he draws. That this national exposition rests upon a real foundation is clear from the testimony of our Lord, which, on the ground of the reference of the Psalm to the Messiah, exhibits the untenable nature of the view then generally held, that the Messiah was to be a mere man. The old rationalism has in vain made every effort to set aside this testimony of our Lord:—compare the enumeration and explanation of the manifold ancient expedients in Bergmann, comm. in Ps. cx. Leyden 1819, the only separate work on our Psalm, and a work which, on account of the careful and almost complete collection of materials, is well worthy of notice. In recent times, Bleek, in his Commentary on the Epistle to the Hebrews, has made an attempt of the same kind—the matter is so clear that it really is not worth while to subject these efforts of mere inclination to further scrutiny. It would imply something altogether derogatory to our Lord, if we were to suppose that he could refer a Psalm of merely common import, with so much decision and confidence, to the Messiah, to himself (comp. still further Matth. xxvi. 64), and deduce from it such important conclusions as he draws. In like manner it presents the apostles and the authors of the New Testament in a very pitiable light, and it implies views altogether derogatory to the divine character of the sacred Scriptures, to suppose that a Psalm, on which they build so much, on which the whole doctrine of the sitting of Christ at the right hand of God is founded, really contains nothing whatever on which to rear such a superstructure; comp. Acts ii. 34, vii. 55, 56; 1 Pet. iii.

22; Rom. viii. 34; 1 Cor. xv. 24 ss.; Eph. i. 20–22; Phil. ii. 9–11; Heb. i. 3, 13, 14, viii. 1, x. 12, 13. It is not necessary, however, in opposition to these men, to call in authorities which they hold to be of no value. We are able, independently of these, and entirely on the force of internal evidence, to shew the inadmissibility of every other reference, so completely, that the existence of such expositions in our day, can be accounted for only by the descent of rationalistic tradition from a time in which all Messianic Psalms had to be set aside at any cost—a descent which occasions a singular contrast to the interpretation of the *prophets*. If we are to have done with all the absurdities of Messianic Psalms, the important question arises, how comes it that nothing is to be found in the Psalms of what forms the kernel and the star of prophecy? The internal reasons in favour of the Messianic exposition are the following:—I. The speaker in ver. 1 calls the Messiah *his Lord*. Now as, according to the title, David is the author of the Psalm, the object can be neither himself nor any other subject, except the Messiah. This argument has been attempted to be got rid of by the assumption, that David does not speak in his own name, but in that of the people. The last author who adopts this view is Hoffmann. Most assuredly nothing is more frequent in the Psalms than for the Psalmist to speak in the name of the people; yea, this is the common case; and that it is the case here is manifest from the connection with Ps. cviii., where, in like manner, the people are introduced speaking, and also from the evidence of our Lord, who, in all the three Evangelists, says, David calls the Messiah *Lord*, not *his Lord*. But everywhere in such passages the Psalmist does not place himself in opposition to the people, but includes himself in them. The only apparent exceptions in the whole book of Psalms, xx. xxi., disappear on a closer view. For David there, along with the whole church, addresses his seed, his posterity on the throne.[a] II. "Sit at my right hand" is an expression which

[a] This objection has been removed in a correct manner by Calvin: The Jews have no good ground for objecting that Christ uses a quibble, because David does not speak in his own name, but in that of the people. For, although it must be acknowledged that the Psalm was composed for the common use of the church, yet, inasmuch as David himself was one of the pious, and a member of the body under the head, he could not exempt himself, nay, he could not dictate a Psalm without singing it also with his own voice.

excludes David and every other ordinary king. It denotes the investing with divine omnipotence, or, as our Lord explains it, the giving all power in heaven and on earth. The attempts to give to this magnificent expression a sense by which it can be accommodated to inferior persons, are, from their very variety, worthy of contempt. They are thereby seen to be the product of mere *inclination*. Hoffmann., Pro. and its Fulfil., gives the sense thus: he shall receive the seat of honour in that place where Jehovah sits enthroned on Mount Sion. But the sitting at the right hand never occurs as merely expressive of honour; it denotes always participation in power and dominion; and the throne of the Lord cannot be in Sion, but in heaven; for in Sion, the throne of the Lord was nothing else than the king's throne; the king sat there, not *next* the throne of God, but on it, as his vicegerent in the government of Israel; comp. 1 Chron. xxviii. 5, "He has chosen Solomon to sit upon the throne of the kingdom of the Lord over Israel;" xxix. 23, "And Solomon sat upon the throne of the Lord." III. According to ver. 3, the people of the king goes forth with him to the battle *in holy attire*. That this expression has occasioned great embarrassment, is manifest from the fact, that De Wette, on the ground of a few MSS., proposes, instead of בהדרי to read בהררי "on the holy *mountains*," which, in this connection, is wholly unsuitable, and destroys the point of the comparison, so necessary, of the dew; while, at the same time, בהדרי is defended by the parallel between the holy priestly *attire* and the *free-will offerings*, and by the high priesthood of the king, who goes forth at the head of his people in holy priestly garments. History furnishes no example of the host going out, in common wars, in sacred garments. IV. The king, according to ver. 4, is to be a priest for ever after the manner of Melchisedec. It has been maintained, that the predicate of priestly royalty might be applied to every one of the Israelitish kings, inasmuch as they all held the highest authority in ecclesiastical matters, arranged the festivals, offered sacrifices, &c., more especially David, who, at the bringing in of the ark of the covenant, 2 Sam. vi., acted entirely as the high priest, was dressed in sacerdotal garments, offered sacrifices, and blessed the people. But it is, after all, very singular, that the Israelitish kings are nowhere else *termed* priests. Assuredly the kings did exercise an important influ-

ence in religious matters; this was necessary from the nature of things, and everywhere occurred. Yet the essentials of the priestly office remained, as formerly, in the exclusive possession of the family of Aaron, which alone was charged with the service of God,—the attempt of Uzziah to share in this prerogative was punished as a dreadful offence with leprosy; comp. 2 Chron. xxvi. 16–21,—and which alone had to do with what formed the peculiar kernel of the priestly office, *the expiating the sins* of the people. David assuredly wore, at the bringing in of the ark, a linen ephod; but this, so far from being identical with what was peculiar to the high priest, was in direct opposition to it; it was the dress only of those who held a subordinate place in the service of God (comp. the Beitr. 3 p. 67);—so that we have here David himself, by a matter of fact, declaring that he was *not* high priest. And even this subordinate dress David wore only on one extraordinary and special occasion. We read, indeed, in 2 Sam. vi. 17, "And David brought burnt offerings before the Lord, and peace offerings;" but that David offered these himself is about as clear from this passage, as that he brought himself to Jerusalem the ark of the covenant, may be proved from ver. 12, or that he built the altar with his own hands may be proved from 2 Sam. xxiv. 25. Even in the law, the offering of sacrifices is frequently attributed to the *people*, according to the usage of speech, *quae causae principali omnia etiam ad materialem pertinentia tribuit;* comp. Beitr. p. 58; and also Jos. viii. 30 ss. The *blessing* is, in the law, not confined exclusively to the priests, but only the priestly form of benediction in Num. vi. David, though not a priest, blessed the people of God with the same right with which Moses, the man of God, blessed the children of Israel before his death, Deut. xxxiii. 1. David's submission to the revealed will of God was marked by tender regard; no one who does not completely misunderstand his whole position in reference to the law could attribute to him the slightest approach to the thought of intruding into the priestly office; and that he was very far from doing this is evident from the fact of his acknowledging Zadok and Abiathar as possessing this office. Moreover it is altogether impossible for us to conceive that the priesthood here spoken of is "one which is essentially connected with rightly constituted royalty," inasmuch as this pretended priesthood never

has applied to it in the Old Testament such a name, and the highly expressive language, "the Lord has sworn, and will not repent," points to something altogether unusual, and so contrary to the existing state of things, that it required the strongest possible guarantee ere it could be believed:—what was a necessary concomitant of royalty did not require to be the object of a solemn asseveration. This priesthood, moreover, in so far as it came into notice in this connection, afforded no security for the willing surrender of the people to God, and for their holiness, no security for victory in the contest against the whole world arrayed in hostility. The imaginary priesthood finally was not after the manner of Melchisedec. For in his case, the narrative discriminates exactly between him *as king* and *as priest: as king*, he brings to Abraham bread and wine, and *as priest*, he imparts to him the sacerdotal blessing, while Abraham, who himself exercised the duties of the priestly office in his own family, gave him *tithes* in acknowledgment of his sacerdotal functions. Hitzig gets quit of a portion of these difficulties by the assumption that the reference is to Jonathan the real high priest. But though, in this case, there exists what is wanting in the others, there is wanting in it what is to be found in them: Jonathan was not a king, and therefore cannot be the representative of the sacerdotal king Melchisedec. Besides, the first and second reasons weigh heavier against this exposition than they do against the others; and the Psalmist, who, according to Hitzig's own view, does not utter poetic phantasies, but divine suggestions, would altogether stand in need of our compassion for speaking with such ridiculous pathos of such a man. The remark of Ewald, "King and royalty appear here on the highest summit of nobility and glory," is alone sufficient to set aside this thought. There can, however, be the less difficulty in recognising in the Messiah the high priest for ever, as even in Is. liii., the Messiah appears not only as a real offerer of sacrifice, but even as real high priest: in the latter office, he sprinkles many nations, lii. 15, presents a sin-offering, liii. 10, intercedes for sinners, ver. 12. Zechariah also, in a prophecy referring to the Psalm before us, ch. vi. 9–15, foretells the union in the Messiah of the priestly and kingly offices (comp. the Christol. 2 p. 69 ss.), and in a passage before this, ch. iii. 8, represents the Messiah as the true high priest.

through whom God will forgive the sins of the whole land, Christol. 2 p. 51.—IV. The king is to be a high priest *for ever*. The expositions which give to this expression a sense less than that of absolute eternity cannot be admitted, inasmuch we have before us a solemn oath of God, and the "for ever" stands in manifest reference to the promise given to David regarding the eternal duration of his family. Hoffmann translates, "till the end of his life:" "we have no reason for understanding the לעולם otherwise than at Ps. xxi. 4," but we have special reason for understanding the *passage before us* differently from the view taken by Hoffmann. Ewald supposes that people always wish the reign of a good king to be eternal; but we have before us no wish of the Psalmist, but a declaration of God, accompanied by a solemn oath. Comp., as to further points connected with עולם, the investigations in Christol. P. ii. p. 427 ss.

The reasons against the Messianic view are of no consequence. It has been said: 1. The Psalmist speaks to the king and high priest as to a cotemporary, to one present; and there is no intimation whatever as to his appearing at a future day for the first time. Bleek writes in this strain, p. 183. But if David calls another king his Lord, he thereby intimates distinctly enough, that he speaks of a person yet to appear. And if we must not adopt the poetical-prophetic anticipation of the future, it will be necessary to return, in regard to Is. ix. 11 and other Messianic passages, to the now exploded interpretations which refer them to some subject existing at the time when the prophet wrote. 2. The idea of a Messiah does not occur in the time of David or of Solomon. In answer to this we point to 2 Sam. xxiii., Ps. ii., xlv., and lxxii. 3. "Such a Messiah, a warrior and a priest, never appeared." We answer: he did indeed appear; but those who adopt this objection "knew him not," Matth. xvi. 12. The poetical form in which he is here spoken of cannot prevent the real fulfilment from being seen, as Jehovah himself in the Old Testament is frequently spoken of under the figure of a human warrior; comp., for example, Is. xiii. 4.

The relation already referred to in our introductory remarks at Ps. cix., as subsisting between that Psalm and the one now before us, was correctly perceived, as to essentials, by the Christian fathers: they say Ps. cix. contains *τὰ εἰς χριστὸν παθήματα*,

the sufferings of Christ, and the Psalm before us, τὰς μετὰ ταῦτα δόξας *the glory that should follow;* comp. the passages in Corderius in the *Catena*, in which, however, they err in interpreting Ps. cix. *exclusively* of the Messiah.

Ver. 1. The נאם *a speech of God, a Revelation*, is always used of an infallible divine revelation, and shews that we have not to do with a poetic dream; in 2 Sam. xxiii. 2, it *follows:* "the Spirit of the Lord speaks by me, and his word is in my tongue." It occurs in the mouth of David, besides Ps. xxxvi. 1, where the נאם יהוה is parodied, in 2 Sam. xxiii. 1. In that passage the expression is dependant upon Num. xxiv. 3 (comp. the Treatise on Balaam, p. 133); and that the passage before us possesses a similar dependance is evident from the circumstance that here the discourse opens the piece—a form which, besides the passage before us and 2 Sam. xxiii., occurs only in Prov. xxx. 1; comp. on Balaam. We have already remarked that in reality the expression, "The Lord says to my Lord," is equivalent to "The Lord says to me of my Lord." That David obtains this revelation in name of the church is evident from the fact that in Ps. cviii. also he speaks in the name of the Lord.—Dan. vii. 13, 14, forms the most ancient commentary upon "Sit thou at my right hand." There the Son of Man comes on the clouds of heaven to the Ancient of Days, to the heavenly throne of God, "and there is given to him dominion, and glory, and majesty, and all peoples, and nations, and tongues shall serve him, his dominion is an everlasting dominion, which does not pass away, and his kingdom shall not be destroyed,"—a passage which our Lord, in Matth. xxvi. 24, connects with the one before us, the real import of which he explains in Matth. xxviii. 18, "From henceforth ye shall see the Son of Man sitting at the right hand of Omnipotence, and coming in the clouds of heaven." Even there the Son of Man rules from heaven over the earth. It is constantly taken for granted in the New Testament that the throne of God, at whose right hand the king sits, is only the *heavenly* throne; comp. Acts ii. 34, Eph. i. 20–22, Heb. i. 13, 14. In reference to the right hand, as the seat and symbol of power and might, comp., for example, Ex. xv. 6, "Thy right hand, O Lord, is glorious in power; thy right hand destroys the enemy." Knapp, in his treatise "On Christ sitting at the right hand of God," main-

tains, without any good reason, that the place at the right hand of kings as he sat upon the throne was given not only to those whom they announced as sharers in their power, but also to those to whom they wished to exhibit their glory and friendship. The example of Bathsheba cannot prove this. She obtained the place at the right hand of Solomon, according to 1 Kings ii. 19, as "the mother of the king;" as such she shared, in a certain sense, fully in his dominion. Even *at table*, those who sat at the right hand of Saul were the individuals who shared in his dominion, generally his son Jonathan, who held under him the place which he would willingly have held also under David (according to 1 Sam. xxiii. 17, "And he said to David, Fear not, for the hand of Saul my father shall not find thee, and thou shalt rule over Israel, and I shall be thy vicegerent, למשנה), and in his absence, Abner; comp. 1 Sam. xx. 25, and Thenius on the passage:—it was a totally different thing, however, to sit on the throne. That in Ps. xlv. 9, the standing of the consort at the right hand denotes such participation in dominion as a woman can enjoy, is evident from ver. 12, "So shall the daughters of Tyre make supplication to thee with gifts," humbly solicit thy favour. Among the ancient Arabians the vicegerents of the king sat at the king's right hand, at assembly; comp. Eichorn, monum. p. 220: assidet وردفه, *i. e.* qui post sequitur, qui secundus a rege est, a dextera ejus, et si in expeditionem egressus fuerit rex, sedet in loco ejus et vices ejus gerit. In the passage before us the expression cannot refer to a mere *place of honour.* For the conquering power with which the seed of David overthrows all his enemies appears in the following verses as the consequence of the sitting at the right hand of God.—That the main emphasis does not lie on the *sitting* appears from Acts vii. 55, 56, where Stephen sees Jesus *standing* at the right hand of God, and from Rom. viii. 34, "who is at the right hand of God." Still the *sitting* is by no means *insignificant;* it is the position of one ruling; *sit at my right hand,* that is, rejoice in thy kingdom, in sharing in my omnipotence and government of the world; comp. on *sitting* as the proper posture of a reigning sovereign at Ps. xxix. 10. We are led to this import of the sitting by the *footstool,* as the opposite of the royal throne, and also by ver. 4, which takes for granted that in the

preceding verses the language used had referred to the royal rank of the seed of David: thou art not only a king but also a priest for ever after the order of Melchisedec, who, to the kingly office from which he had his name, added also the office of priest. Even in representatives of earthly sovereigns, the sitting at the right hand of the king announced their rank as that of vicegerents of royalty.—The explanation of Grotius, "*be sure of my assistance*," has been of late renewed by Bleek on the Epistle to the Hebrews. According to him, the sitting at the right hand "denotes nothing more than the immediate shelter and defence which shall be imparted to the king by God." But this translation proceeds entirely from the *desire* to adapt to the assumed subject words which generally are not suitable: sitting at the right hand is *never* used in this sense. This is rather the sense which belongs to the entirely different expression *standing*, or *being at the right hand of any one*; comp. Ps. xvi. 8, cxix. 31, and ver. 5 here.—We have already observed that the עַד is to be taken exclusively. It is used by Paul in this sense in 1 Cor. xv. 24, ss. We cannot translate: till I *lay* thine enemies, but only: till I *make* thine enemies. Jo. Arnd "As this our king has a glorious throne, so has he also a wonderful footstool; and as his royal throne imparts to us comfort in the highest degree, so his footstool also imparts to us joy. How joyful shall his poor subjects be when they hear that their prince and king has slain their enemies and delivered them out of their hands! How did their poor subjects go forward to meet Saul and Jonathan when these kings had slain the Philistines! . . . In like manner our king has his enemies under his feet; thus shall he also bring all our enemies under his feet, for the victory is ours, God be thanked, who has given us the victory through Christ our Lord."

Ver. 2. That we must translate, *his-power rod*, in the sense of *his powerful mighty* rod, is manifest from such passages as Jerem. xlviii. 17, Ez. xix. 11, 12, 14, in which מַטֵּה עֹז occurs undoubtedly in the sense *of powerful rod*. מַטֶּה never signifies *sceptre*, but always *rod*. In Jer. xlviii. 17, a passage which Gesenius, next to the one before us, adduces for this sense, the parallel מִקְלָ is decisive the other way; and Ezekiel, in ch. xix. 11, *distinguishes* between the *rod* and the *sceptre*. The rod is the instrument of slaughter and punishment; comp. Is. ix. 3, x.

5, 15, xiv. 5, Ez. vii. 10, 11, where Theodoret says, "he called the rod the punishment." It is hence more suitable in the connection, especially in relation to ver. 1 (the entire Psalm has to do not with the government of the Anointed generally, but singly and alone with the subjugation of bitter enemies), and in parallel to רדה, which does not mean to *reign* but to *lord it over*. The emblem, therefore, of the rod of the Anointed thus considered is the rod of Moses, forming as it did the counterpart to the rod which Egypt raised against Israel,—a parallelism to which Isaiah, in ch. x. 26 (comp. with ver. 24), refers, the emblem of the punishing power which the Lord has given to his church in relation to a hostile world. Next to this passage there are other two passages deserving of notice, Micah iv. 2, 3, and Is. ii. 3, 4, "And many nations go and say, Come let us go up to the mountain of the Lord, to the house of the God of Jacob, that he may teach us his ways, and we may walk in his paths, for the Law goes out from Sion, and the word of the Lord from Jerusalem, and he judges among nations, and rebukes many peoples; and they beat their swords into pruning hooks." These passages are not exactly parallel; but they partake so far of the nature of parallel passages, that they give the opposite view, the peaceful reign of the Lord in his Anointed in Sion over his faithful subjects, or over those who willingly have submitted to him. "The royal sceptre was of a twofold symbolical nature: on the one hand, it pointed to the staff of the shepherd; and, on the other, to the rod of the governor of a house of correction."—Stier. In the passages now quoted, the *friendly* aspect of the sceptre of the Anointed is presented as it is in Ps. ii. 9, and in the fundamental passage, Num. xxiv. 17, alongside of the *threatening* one. *Over Sion*, as the centre point of the kingdom of the Anointed, comp. at Ps. ii. 6. On "rule in the midst of thine enemies," Num. xxiv. 19, ought to be compared, "And one shall rule out of Jacob, and shall destroy him that remaineth of the city," more especially as David, in 2 Sam. xxiii., undoubtedly refers to the prophecy of Balaam; comp. the Treatise on Balaam, p. 133. That prophecy received its preliminary fulfilment in David, who did rule in the midst of his enemies; comp. 2 Sam. viii. But David was not satisfied with this foretaste; his eyes were sharpened to perceive its proper fulfilment. Luther: "He gives us

no other mark as to where Christ is to reign, and where we shall find his church, except in the midst of his enemies."

Ver. 3.—According to the common interpretation, נדבות ought to have the sense of "willingness"—*thy people is entirely willing*. But it was shewn at Ps. liv. 6, that נדבה has only one sense, that of a *free-will gift*—a gift which the heart prompts any one to bring. We might look upon the *Lord* as the giver:—*thy people, gifts*, instead of *shall be gifted to thee by the Lord*—allusion being made to Ps. lxviii. 9, where נדבות occurs in the sense of *gifts given by God*. But that we are rather to consider the people themselves as the giver, the receiver being not the Anointed, but the Lord—*thy people give or consecrate themselves willingly to the Lord*—is clear from the constant use of ליהוה נדבה in the sense of *free-will gifts*, which are brought to the Lord (נדבה is found only in one passage signifying *gifts of God*, and never occurs in the sense of *human gifts* offered to each other as to the Lord), from the manifest reference to the free-will offerings at the dedication of the tabernacle, Ex. xxv. 2, xxxv. 29, xxxvi. 3, from התנדב ליהוה, *to dedicate one's self to the Lord*, as found in the lips of David, 1 Chron. xxix. 14, 17, and from the special use of this phrase as applied to such as dedicated themselves to the Lord for sacred *warfare*, in 2 Chron. xvii. 16, Jud. v. 2, 9; and, finally, from ver. 4, according to which the Anointed is the *priest*, who thus can not only receive himself the free-will gifts, but through whose mediation they must be offered. The expression ביום חילך is usually translated: *in the day of thy host, i. e.* in the day when the host is led out to battle or is mustered. But that חיל ought rather to be taken in its usual sense of *strength, might, power* (comp. Ps. xviii. 32, lix. 11, lxxxiv. 7), is manifest from Ps. lx. 12, cviii. 13, "in God shall we execute might, and he shall tread down our enemies," to which allusion is here made (by the king at the right hand of God, the hope there expressed shall be realized), and from the fundamental passage in the prophecy of Balaam, Num. xxiv. 18, "Israel executes *might*," on which 1 Sam. xiv. 48 depends. "In thy *power*-day" refers, besides, to ver. 1 and 2, where *power* had been promised to the Anointed in relation to the enemies, and is equivalent to, in the day of battle, when thou hast obtained possession of this power granted to thee by the Lord, when "rule thou in the midst of

them" shall be in the act of being fulfilled. Finally, the "power-day" is parallel to the *rod of strength* in ver. 2, and to the day of wrath of the Lord and of his Anointed in ver. 5. It is evident from the accents after "in the power-day," that we must consider the words, "in holy attire," as belonging to the second half of the verse; the distinction between the two portions of the verse is very great—comp. Dachsel on the accentuation, *Biblia accentuata.* The words give the point of resemblance between the common and the spiritual dew. It consists in the beauty which is peculiar to the troops of the king because of their holy garments, as it is to the dew. Those who rob themselves of this announcement of the point of resemblance, have recourse to *guessing.* They take, in most cases, *the multitude* as the point of resemblance, and refer to 2 Sam. xvii. 12, where Hushai said to Absalom, "and we come upon him in one of the places where he is found, and fall upon him as the dew falleth upon the earth. In this passage it is exceedingly doubtful whether it is the multitude that does form the point of resemblance; it is as likely to be the sudden and unexpected surprise; but, at all events, it is only the preceding context that affords any justification for thinking of the multitude, which is by no means the most obvious thought. Then, by this view, the connection with ver. 4 is destroyed; the true priesthood of the Anointed has no real connection with the mere quantity, but only with the quality of the people. Some seek the point of resemblance in מרחם משחר, and find it only in the idea of what is unexpected, inexplicable by human causes. But in this case the connection with ver. 4 is destroyed, which demands that "from the morning-womb" be considered as limiting only what stands next to it. "*Holy ornaments*" is a poetical expression for the *holy garments* בגדי קדש, in which the high priest, according to Lev. xvi. 4, discharged his duties on the great day of atonement. The "holy beauty," the הדרת קדש, which in Ps. xxix. 2 is attributed to the angels worshipping God in the heavenly sanctuary, is a corresponding expression. In Rev. xix. 14, the heavenly host of the contending and conquering lamb are seen *clothed in pure white linen.* In reference to what corresponds to the holy garments, comp. Col. iii. 9, 10; 1 Pet. iii. 3, 4.—משחר, which occurs only in this passage, is best taken in the sense of the

place of the sun-rising, the eastern sky; comp. Ewald, § 160. Ps. cxxxiii. 3, is to be compared, where David compares brotherly harmony, as a lovely gift *of heavenly origin*, to the dew of Hermon; Mich. v. 7, "a dew from the Lord which tarrieth not for man, nor waiteth for the sons of men;" Job xxxviii. 28, "hath the rain a father, or who hath begotten the dew?" As ילדות occurs in the sense of the season of youth in Lam. xi. 9, 10, and as it is doubtful whether it can signify "young men," it is better to translate "dew of thy youth;" "thy youth-dew;" "thy youthful dew;" "thy youthful soldiery like the dew in its beauty."

Ver. 4.—In Heb. vii. 21, great stress is laid upon the oath with which God here assures the seed of David, and also in ver. 24, 25, upon the expression "for ever," which has no natural reference to the historical parallel. On "and will not repent," comp. Num. xxiii. 19, 1 Sam. xv. 29. The י in על דברתי is the old external mark of the stat. constr., the so termed *paragogic Jod*, which occurs also in other passages in the Psalms of David; comp. Ps. ci. 5, ciii. 3, 4. In this case the form is manifestly in imitation of the preceding Melchesidec. The על דברת means properly "upon the thing of," so that the thing, the relation of Melchesidec, forms the substratum, the measure and rule for thine. The Septuagint give κατὰ τὴν τάξιν, which the author of the Epistle to the Hebrews, who follows that version in most cases—for example in v. 10, vii. 15—explains κατὰ τὴν ὁμοιότητα. The על דברת occurs frequently in Song of Sol., but in a sense altogether different. That Melchisedec was king of *Jerusalem* was shewn at Ps. lxxvi. 2. This is clear also from the passage before us. For it is as to a type of the king of *Sion*, ver. 2, that reference is made to Melchisedec. The oath is in reality not made to the king at the right hand of God, but to the trembling believer. Arnd: "I swear to you poor sinners, by my holy and great name, that I have appointed, and given to you for your comfort, this my Son for a high priest, who shall atone for you and bless you."

Ver. 5.—That the second strophe begins here is evident, besides other reasons, from the reference of "the Lord at thy right hand," "to sit at my right hand," and to the conclusion of Ps. cix. Many ancient expositors suppose that the address is here directed *to God*, and consequently that the name אדני is here

applied to the king and high priest. But the reasons adduced for this view will not stand the test. It has been said, 1st, It is not to be thought that the Psalmist should place, in such close juxtaposition, the two clauses, "the king is at the right hand of Jehovah," and "Jehovah is at the right hand of the king." But there is no reason why he should not. Assuredly because the king sits at the right hand of Jehovah, that is, without a figure, because all power has been given unto him in heaven and in earth, Jehovah is at the right hand of the king, stands by him with his omnipotence in the conflict against his enemies. Or, because the king is connected with the right hand of omnipotence, *his* right hand must be strengthened by omnipotence. 2d, In ver. 7, we add, even in ver. 6, the king is undeniably the subject. But there occurs *a change* of subject before this; in ver. 5 we have what the Lord does for the king, and in ver. 6 and 7 what the king himself does in the Lord. And, on the other hand, against this interpretation may be urged the following reasons:—1. The address throughout the whole Psalm is directed only to the king and high priest; 2. In Ps. cix. 31, to which passage attention is directed back in the passage before us, the Lord stands at the right hand of the needy man. As there he stands with his omnipotence in aid of the seed of David in his humiliation, so does he here in his exaltation. 3. Were the address directed to God, the name אדני would be given to the king, as distinguishing him from Jehovah, which is not suitable.—That after "he smites," we should suppose added, "by thee," is evident, irrespective of ver. 6 and 7, from "at thy right hand," according to which the right hand of the king is conceived of as in action, and is strengthened only by the Lord. The assertion of De Wette is very perplexing: the king sitting enthroned at Jehovah's right hand, that is, conceived of as in a state of rest, cannot lead on a battle. The sitting at the right hand of God, on the contrary, is descriptive of a state of the highest activity, implies that God does nothing except through the agency of this his vicegerent. On the expression, "in the days of his wrath," comp. Ps. ii. 5. *The day of the wrath of God* is also *the power-day of the king*, ver. 3. On he *strikes kings* (Ps. xviii. 38, lxviii. 21, 23, ii. 10), Luther: "He really threatens such great heads in an awful manner, that if they will not hear, and

cannot obey, they shall be terrified to death. And assuredly he would willingly, by these means, allure them to repentance, and persuade them to turn, and to cease from raging against this Lord. But if they will not, they shall know against whom it is that they go on. . . . This is our consolation which upholds us, and makes our heart joyful and glad against the persecution and rage of the world, that we have such a Lord, who not only delivers us from sin and eternal death, but also protects us, and delivers us in sufferings and temptation, so that we do not sink under them. And though men rage in a most savage manner against Christians, yet neither the gospel nor Christianity shall perish; but their heads shall be destroyed against it. For if their persecutions were to go on unceasingly, Christianity could not remain. Wherefore he gives them a time, and says he will connive at them for a while, but not longer than till the hour comes which he here calls the *day of wrath*. And if they will not now cease in the name of God, they must then cease in the name of the devil."

Ver. 6. Several suppose that Jehovah is here still the subject, and that the king, for the first time, is the subject in ver. 7. But against this there is the consideration that "he drinks from the brook," presupposes a hot *contest*, and appears unsuitable if no contest is supposed to be spoken of in the preceding clauses. We must, therefore, take it for granted that the change of subject goes on from *this verse*. As the מלא even with the Zere occurs undeniably in a transitive sense, and signifies *to fill* (comp. Gesen. in his Thes.), there is no reason to assume a change of subject: it shall be full of dead bodies. The place to be filled is to be supplied from the clause "upon the wide earth." That the ראש is used in its proper sense and cannot be translated: *a head over great lands*, is clear not from the על—against the assertion that it must necessarily have been ראש ארץ רבה, comp. Ps. xlvii. 2—but from the clause, "he shall raise the *head*," in ver. 7, and from the parallel passage, Ps. lxviii. 21, "God smites the head of his enemies, the hairy head of him who walketh in his sins," and Hab. iii. 13,—comp. ver. 14, מחץ ראש occurs in like manner in the sense of a breaker of heads. On our verse we should compare the expanded description in Rev. xix. 11 ss., comp. xvi. 1. ss.

Ver. 7. That the בדרך is not to connected with מנחל, "he shall drink of the brook in the way," but that we must translate, "from the brook he shall drink on the way," is evident from the accents (comp. Dachsel) and the parallel passage, Ps. cii. 23, "He has weakened in the way my strength." The occurrence in the life of Samson is in both cases well fitted to explain the figure. And in all probability allusion is distinctly made to it, as in Is. ix. 3, x. 26, allusion is made to the victory over Midian by Gideon, and also in Ps. lxxxiii. 11, and in Ps. lxviii., to the song of Deborah, and in our Psalm to Melchisedec. The occurrence lying within the period of the Judges, immortalized by the name of the place, could not be unknown to David and to those for whom he wrote in the first instance; so that the allusion would in so far be understood. The Fathers and the old expositors understand by *the brook* partly the sufferings of Christ themselves, partly the revival of spirit which he experienced during these sufferings, without observing that the Psalm has to do throughout only with Christ *exalted*, and, without any good reason, going back to the subject of Ps. cix. According to several, the drinking out of the brook denotes the *hardiness* of the king: "without stopping or having any royal self-indulgence, he drinks out of the brook in the way. Such a king must conquer." But against this there is the fact that, according to this translation, the word of greatest importance, the "only" is wanting, and that *water* in the east is never reckoned as a drink of inferior description, but in Scripture is employed as an emblem of what revives; comp., for example, Ps. xxxvi. 8, Jer. xxxi. 9. We cannot refer to Jud. vi. 5, 6, as favouring this interpretation. The test which Gideon there made use of, refers only to the *manner* of drinking. All, the zealous and the effeminate alike, drink of the brook in the way:—according to the interpretation, בדרך is falsely connected with נחל. On, "he shall lift up the head," that is, he shall triumph, Luther: "that is, shall be glorious, and shall powerfully rule over all," Ps. iii. 3, xxvii. 6. That the words indicate an enduring, a final triumph, not a momentary strengthening, appears from the opposition to the *smiting* of the head of the enemies. It is also only when thus understood that they are suitable as a conclusion, as is evident from the fact that this feeble interpretation has led many to the idea that the Psalm is only a fragment.

To the Davidic trilogy there is now added in Ps. cxi.–cxiii., a new trilogy. For that these three Psalms are connected together, appears from the following reasons: 1. All the three have the common object to strengthen the suffering and conflicting church by praising God; Ps. cxi. does this by the praise of God on account of his glorious deeds in the past, which guarantee glorious help for the future, Ps. cxii., by the praise of God as the faithful recompenser, and Ps. cxiii., by the praise of God as the helper of the needy and of the miserable. 2. While Ps. cxi. and cxii. have the hallelujah only at the beginning, Ps. cxiii. has it at the beginning and at the end, and thus announces itself, as does Ps. cvi., in relation to Ps. civ. and cv. as the conclusion which binds together the whole trilogy. 3. In connection with this there is the fact that of the significant number twelve of Jehovah in the three Psalms, six belong to the first Psalm, and six to the two last. As in Ps. cxi., Jehovah occurs four times, and in Ps. cxii. twice, so it occurs in Ps. cxiii. in the first strophe four times, and in the second twice. 4. As the 113th Psalm forms the conclusion of a trilogy, the fact that the Psalm is, in point of form, entirely ruled by the number three is thereby illustrated.

PSALM CXI.

The Psalm praises the Lord because of his great works, particularly the redemption out of Egypt, ver. 9; the supply of food in the wilderness, ver. 5; the placing of Israel in the inheritance of the heathen, ver. 6; then the great resplendent deeds of kindness which he showed to his people, and which for them had a similar import to what the deeds of the redemption through Christ have for the church of the New Testament.

The design of the Psalm, as the conclusion shows, is to counteract that *pusillanimity* which is so injurious to all zeal in walking in the commandments of God, that despair as to the power and willingness of God to help his people, to which their mournful condition was so apt to give rise. The mighty deeds of the past come into notice in the case of the Psalmist as the ground of hope for the future as matter-of-fact prophecies, as affording a pledge that the misery of the present will be only transitory.

The Psalm proceeds on the supposition that the condition of the people of God at the time was a *mournful* one. For it is only when we are in such a condition that we take refuge in the past from the present. That the Psalm was not composed before the end of the Babylonish captivity is clear from the hallelujah, which occurs for the first time in a Psalm of this date, Ps. civ. 35. We are brought into times after the captivity by the position of the *Psalm*, after Ps. cvii., which celebrates that good deed of the Lord. We shall be able to determine particulars more fully only from materials furnished by the following Psalms of the cycle.

The circumstances of the new colony were poor and mournful, and fell very much below the expectations which had been raised by the declarations of the prophets; comp. the description of these circumstances in the Intro. to Zechariah, Christol. In room of the shout of joy arising from the deliverance, which had been heard at the beginning, there soon succeeded a state of dejection. People at that period did no longer compare the present, as they had done in the beginning, with what immediately preceded it, but with the more remote period preceding the captivity, and with the prospects which had been opened up by the prophets. The sacred Psalmists, no less than the prophets, had sufficient reason to cry out to the people: lift up the hands which hang down, and strengthen the feeble knees. The whole object was to get the trembling people again to set their heart upon their God. The Psalmist sought to gain this end, by enlisting the people along with himself in the work of praising God.

The formal arrangement is exactly the same as in Ps. cxi. and in Ps. cxii., a sure proof of the connection subsisting among these Psalms. The whole is complete, both times in the number ten. The individual clauses of the verses begin with the letters of the alphabet. The first eight verses contain each two clauses; the two last three,—a circumstance to be explained from the desire of the Psalmist not to go beyond the number ten, which is also in other passages not unfrequently connected with the alphabetical arrangement, because both of these, the number ten and the alphabet, are the signature of perfection, of what is complete in itself. In consequence of the constraint demanded by the alphabetical arrangement, the mighty deeds of God are not recounted in chronological order.

If we look at the Introductory Davidic trilogy, it becomes manifest that ver. 6, "the strength of his works he shewed to his people, giving to them the inheritance of the heathen," must be considered as the middle point of the Psalm. The inversion of the relations of Israel to the heathen world—the people of the Lord to whom dominion over the world had been promised, serving them in their own land—was what especially filled men's minds with pain. Hence it is exactly at this verse that we must fix the turning point of the Psalm. The ten is divided by five. The first half has ten, the second twelve members.

Ver. 1. *Hallelujah. I will praise the Lord with the whole heart, in the confidential assembly of the upright and the congregation.* Ver. 2. *Great are the works of the Lord, enquired after according to all their wishes.* Ver. 3. *Majesty and glory is his work, and his righteousness endureth for ever.* Ver. 4. *A memorial he has erected for his works, gracious and compassionate is the Lord.* Ver. 5. *Nourishment he gives to those who fear him, he remembers always his covenant.* Ver. 6. *The strength of his works he shewed to his people, giving to them the inheritance of the heathen.* Ver. 7. *The works of his hands are truth and justice, to be depended upon are all his commandments.* Ver. 8. *Firm always and for ever, wrought in truth and righteousness.* Ver. 9. *Redemption he sent to his people, he arranged for eternity his covenant, holy and dreadful is his name.* Ver. 10. *The beginning of wisdom is the fear of the Lord, good understanding have all they who practice them; his praise endureth for ever.*

Ver. 1. The circumstance that the Hallelujah stands out of the alphabetical arrangement is sufficient to shew that it ought to be considered merely as the key note of the Psalm. Berleb.: "It shews that this is a Psalm which incites to the praise of God." Luther: "It is just as much as when we wish to begin to praise God, we exhort and stir up each other. It is thus that we Germans do, when we are in the church; or when one among us begins and says, *let us praise God;* or when the preacher gives out the first line of the hymn to be sung. Thus David (?) here says to his people, *let us praise the Lord*, and in particular thus, *I thank the Lord with my whole heart.*" The first clause is a repetition from Ps. cix. 30. In the second clause it is impossible to

find a distinction between privately and publicly, for the whole cycle of Psalms was manifestly designed for use in the public worship of God, comp. especially Ps. cxv. 8. The public assembly of the righteous (comp. at Ps. cvii. 42) is at the same time a *confidence*, a *confidential meeting* (comp. at Ps. lxiv. 2, lxxxiii. 4), because the world is *shut out* from it, the congregation of the Lord is a community *by itself*. Thus Luther: "I thank the Lord here in this public assembly, where we are in a peculiar manner by ourselves, as it were in secret council, and no heathen or stranger must be beside us."—The praise of the Lord, announced in ver. 1, begins with ver. 2. The *works* of the Lord are pointed out in the first clause as the objects of this praise (comp. Deut. iv. 34, xxix. 2, Rev. xv. 3), those, according to the connection with ver. 1, which he has especially done for the righteous, for his church. In the second clause the חֲפָצֵיהֶם cannot be the plural of חָפֵץ the adjective, for this retains its Zere in the stat. constr.; comp. xl. 14. The word signifies always *pleasure, satisfaction, desire*, even in Prov. viii. 11, "wisdom is better than pearls, and all wishes come not near it," never *beauty, preciousness, loveliness*, (hence we must reject all such translations, "to be search into in regard to all their beauties," a translation, moreover, which takes דרושים in an arbitrary sense), and the suffix does not denote the object of the desire, but it refers to those who desire. The suffix thus can refer only to the *righteous*, (comp. לכל־חפצו *according to his every wish*, 1 Kings ix. 11); and the translation is, *must be enquired after according to their every wish, so that they, when the deeds of the Lord are enquired after or searched into*, (comp. the דרשׁ in Ps. cxix. 45, 94, 155), *find a complete answer and satisfaction, there is everywhere a response, there are no questions to be evaded.*—On "majesty and glory" in ver. 3, comp. at Ps. civ. 1. The *righteousness* of God is the property by which he gives to every one his own, to the righteous *salvation*, comp. Ps. lxxxix. 14, 16, ciii. 6, 17.—In ver. 4, "he hath erected a memorial," points to the wonderful magnitude of the deeds of the Lord. Thus Calvin: "to perform things worthy of being remembered, and whose fame may never perish." The second clause depends upon Ex. xxxiv. 6.—The טרף in ver. 5 denotes properly the *booty of wild beasts*, and is used only as a poetical term for *human nourishment*. The food of Israel in the wilder-

ness, is what is meant, the manna, and the quails. At the second clause we are to suppose added: as this wonderful provision for his people shews, or as faith draws from its this firm conclusion. This ascent from the individual to the general, stands in accordance with the object of the Psalm, which universally considers the past only as a looking glass for the future, the temporal doings of God as the type of his eternal providence.—The הגיד, *to shew*, in ver. 6, contested by Hitzig, is justified by this, that the doings of God appear to the Psalmist as a matter-of-fact intelligence or proclamation. We are not to translate, "in order to give," but "giving to them;" comp. Ewald, § 280. For the matter-of-fact proclamation is here more exactly described, by which God makes known to his people the strength of his works. The Psalmist refers to the putting of the Israelites into the possessions of the numerous and warlike nations who occupied Canaan, in which he sees a type of the future possession by Israel of the dominion over the whole world; comp. Is. lx. 14.—The *works* of the Lord, in ver. 7, are just as in ver. 2, his deeds; it is with these that the whole Psalm has professedly to do. The *commandments* of God (properly his *commissions*) are made mention of in the second clause (which depends upon Ps. xix. 7, 8), only in a subordinate sense, only in so far as light falls upon them from the quality of the works; his commandments are *thus* to be depended upon, for he who *acts* in this way cannot lead his people on the ice in regard to his commandments. The commandments comprehend here, at the same time, the *promises* which are connected with obedience to them; yea, it is these promises that are here brought chiefly before the mind. The oppressed people thought that they felt themselves here on apparently insecure ground, and in this way their zeal was paralysed. The prophet strengthens the feeble hands, inasmuch as he intimates that the Lawgiver has gloriously vindicated his claim to obedience by his deeds of omnipotence and love.—In ver. 8, the first clause refers to the *commandments*, and the second to the *works*. For it is clear as day that we cannot translate "to fulfil with faithfulness and honour," against the sense of the part. pa., the reference of עשוים to מעשיו and the sense of אמת, which only means *truth*. The praise of the *works* of God is thus shut in on both sides by the praise of the *commandments*, which is merely asso-

ciated with it and derived from it. The סמוך is properly *propped up*, next *firm*, and occurs again in Ps. cxii. 8. The ישר is neut. *righteous nature*, comp. at Ps. xi. 7.—The *redemption*, in ver. 9, is the deliverance out of Egypt. The expression, "he arranged for eternity his covenant," is the general truth as confirmed by the special deed; comp. at ver. 5.—Ver. 10 contains the *conclusion* drawn from what had gone before; therefore, because the Lord is so glorious in his works on behalf of his own people, and because his commandments which he has given them are thus so firm, and so surely to be depended upon, and the reward of faithful obedience shall thus so certainly be bestowed, this faithful obedience, the fear of the Lord, is the beginning of wisdom. The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom, is said in opposition to natural reason, which, linked to what is immediately before the eyes, regards the fear of the Lord, which appears for the present to bring forth no fruit, as *stupidity*, saying, either in pusillanimous despair, or in open defiance: "it is in vain to serve God, and what profit is it that we have kept his ordinances, and that we have walked mournfully before the Lord of hosts? and now we call the proud happy, yea, they that work wickedness are set up, yea, they that tempt God are even delivered," Mal. iii. 14, 15; comp. Christol. 3. p. 422 ss. We need only to cast our eye upon the historical personality of God, to dissipate those mists which beset the mind, and to find arising in our mind the firm conviction, that in the end it shall be well with the righteous. Thus the fear of God which, on superficial consideration, appears as stupidity, because it is dissappointed of its reward, shall be seen to constitute the highest wisdom. The first clause depends upon the two passages, Prov. i. 7, "the fear of the Lord is the *beginning*, ראשית, of knowledge," and Prov. ix. 10. "the beginning, תחלת, of *wisdom* is the fear of the Lord," on which also Job xxviii. 28 depends: "and he said to men, behold the fear of the Lord, that is *wisdom*, and departing from evil is *understanding*." That the ראשית is the beginning as to time, is evident from the corresponding term תחלה. The beginning of wisdom, however, its A, B, C is also its sum. The *fear of the Lord* is childlike, reverential fear, which does not thrust out perfect love, but goes hand in hand with it. For this alone is able to call forth "*delight* in the commandments of

God," Ps. cxii. 1, which appears here as the attendant of the fear of God. The שִׂכֶל טוֹב is from Prov. iii. 4; comp. chap. xiii. 15. The plural suffix in עֹשֵׂיהֶם refers to the commandments of the Lord, ver. 7 and 8, a reference which is all the more natural, as the fear of the Lord is equivalent to the fulfilling of his commandments, as is manifest by the reference of ver. 10 to verses 7 and 8: great are the works of the Lord, to be depended upon therefore are his commandments, wise therefore is he who seeks reverently to fulfil his commandments; comp. Deut. xxviii. 58, where "to do all the words of this law," and "to fear this holy and dreadful name," are placed together as of equal import, Ps. cxii. 1. That fear of the Lord which is *inoperative*, and makes itself known only in superficial emotion, is not considered by Scripture as worthy of the name. That the suffix in תְּהִלָּתוֹ refers to the *Lord*, is manifest from the reference to the Hallelujah at the beginning of this and the following Psalms. The words bring together, in a short compass, what had formerly been said as forming the basis of the two first members; *for*, such confidence grows up in us out of his glorious deeds in times past, his praise, his renown, lasteth for ever, and thus the apparent stupidity of those who fear him and do his commandments, is seen to be in the end wisdom; Israel shall in due season attain to salvation, to dominion over the world, as has gloriously been fulfilled in Christ.

PSALM CXII.

This Psalm is a praise of God as the true recompenser. In the preceding Psalm, courage had been imparted to those who failed to observe this recompense, by pointing to the glorious deeds of God in times past; and here the recompense to be expected is described at length. There the basis is assigned to the "*that*" of the recompense, and here to the "*how*." God will not be wanting to himself;—this is the fundamental thought;—let a man sow faithfully, though it be in tears, in due season he shall reap in joy.

This Psalm is immediately connected with the last verse of the preceding one, and may be considered as a commentary on

it. In ver. 3, 4, 8, it stands in verbal reference to it, with a designed variation in the sense. The formal arrangement in both Psalms is completely the same,—proof enough that we have before us a pair of Psalms. A third Psalm, cxiii., is added, to make up the collection.

Ver. 1. *Hallelujah.—Blessed is the man who fears the Lord, has great pleasure in his commandments.* Ver. 2. *His seed shall be a warrior on the earth, the generation of the righteous shall be blessed.* Ver. 3. *Fulness and riches are in his house, and his rightequsness endureth for ever.* Ver. 4. *There ariseth in darkness light to the upright, who is gracious and compassionate and just.* Ver. 5. *Blessed is the man who is compassionate and lendeth, he careth for his affairs with justice.* Ver. 6. *For through eternity he shall not be moved, for eternal remembrance he shall be just.* Ver. 7. *Before evil intelligence he is not afraid, his heart is comforted trusting in the Lord.* Ver. 8. *Firm is his heart, he is not afraid until he see his pleasure on his enemies.* Ver. 9. *He scatters abroad, he gives to the poor, his righteousness endureth for ever; his horn is high in honour.* Ver. 10. *The wicked shall see it, and be angry, gnash the teeth and melt away: the desire of the wicked goes to the ground.*—The second clause of ver. 1 describes more exactly the fear of God, which may assure itself of salvation, with reference to those who have "Lord, Lord," in their lips, and in deeds deny him,—a reference which pervades the whole Psalm. The *pleasure* in the commandments of God, from which alone true obedience can come—for mental inclination of one kind can only be overborne by mental inclination of another, and the love for what is impure, can only, be successfully counteracted by the pure love of the Lord and of his commandments—exists only in those who are in a state of grace; comp. at Ps. xix. 7, 10. The "warrior on the earth" (comp. at Ps. lii. 1, the sense "powerful" is arbitrarily assumed), ver. 2, is from Gen. x. 8; and even the reference to this passage shews that the בארץ is not to be translated in the *land*. *His seed*, the posterity of the man of Judah, Is. v. 3. It becomes manifest here that the Psalm has a national reference, in accordance with the preceding Davidic trilogy, and the remaining Psalms of the cycle. The promise of *being a warrior* suits well the *whole people*, to whom power and

blessing for overcoming the world, is promised in case of their being faithful to the covenant (comp. Deut. xxxiii. 29), but not individuals, very few of whom were ever called to be warriors; with the individual reference also the limitation of heroism to the *posterity* is strange; the "generation of the righteous" is parallel to "his seed," which, according to Ps. cxi. 1, is to be considered as a term denoting Israel.—*His righteousness*, ver. 3,—bestowed upon him by God, whose righteousness remains for ever, on the ground of his eternally abiding subjective *righteousness*, ver. 9 here, the foundation of salvation, or salvation itself considered as a matter-of-fact justification; comp. Is. liv. 17, xlv. 24, and at Ps. xxiv. 5. It is thus manifest that the threefold repetition of this word in both Psalms is anything rather than "a proof of the small inventive power of the author," an objection which rebounds upon the head of the expositor who made it. Berleb.: "*Endureth for ever*," just as he pays attention to righteousness, not for a few hours or days, but for his whole lifetime," Ez. xviii. 24, 26, Luke i. 75.—In ver. 4, the second clause standing in opposition to ישרים, serves to define them more exactly; this was all the more necessary as "the righteous," on the ground of Num. xxiii. 10, had become to a certain extent a proper name of Israel, as is manifest from Ps. cxi. 1. Many expositors refer the predicates to the Lord, either: "*from* the gracious," or "he is gracious," &c., appealing to the fact that those predicates always in other passages, and even in Ps. cxi. 1, are applied to the Lord. But this is not altogether decisive. According to the actual relation of the Psalm before us to Ps. cxi., we have to expect here not a *repetition* but a *sacred parody*, and it is just because of the common use of these predicates, as applied to the Lord, that they are transferred in the passage before us to the righteous among men, who ought to be compassionate, &c., *just as*, and *because* he, their heavenly Father, is compassionate; comp. Matth. v. 45, 48. Arnd.: "because a God-fearing heart knows well that all good from above flows from the compassion of God, so meditating upon the compassion of God makes it also compassionate. For that is the true fear of God, which endeavours always more and more to imitate God, and to become like him in his divine perfections." *Against* the reference to the Lord we have to urge, that the righteous require to be more particularly described, that ver. 5 is mani-

festly an expansion of ver. 4, particularly that the חנון there refers manifestly to חנן in ver. 4, and finally that in the parallel passage, Is. lviii. 7, the *rising of the light* is in like manner connected with the works of compassion:" "Is it not to deal thy bread to the hungry, and that thou bring the poor that are cast out to thy house, when thou seest the naked, that thou cover him, and that thou hide not thyself from thine own flesh? *then shall thy light break forth as the morning*, &c., and if thou draw out thy soul to the hungry and satisfy the afflicted soul, *then shall thy light rise in obscurity*, and thy darkness be as the noon-day." Ps. xcvii. 11 also depends upon this passage of Isaiah.—In ver. 5, the טוב, *good* = *prosperous*, Is. iii. 10, Jer. xliv. 17, corresponds to the אשרי in ver. 1.[a] Several translate contrary to the idiom: "May it go well with the man, he gives and lends." In this case the article could not be wanting. The being compassionate and lending does not come into notice as a *blessing*, in so far as the righteous are provided with the means of being so (in this case Ps. xxxvii. 21, 26, would have to be compared, passages from which the *expression* is most certainly taken), but as a *virtue*, comp. Prov. xiv. 21, "he who is compassionate towards the poor, salvation to him!" ver. 31. The כלכל stands in its usual sense, *to nourish, to care for*, comp. at Ps. lv. 23. The *right* here, opposition to the manifestations of *love* with which it goes hand in hand, is that by which a man improves his circumstances, keeps them in good condition. The כלכל has moreover the sense of *to hold*, and *to endure*, which are not suitable here; but it has not the sense of *disponere* (Vulg. Luther), or *moderari*, nor that of to *maintain* or *to prop up*. The exposition "he cares for (even by this) his concerns in the judgment," is inconsistent with the want of the article; also the במשפט corresponds to the צדיק, as the "is compassionate and lends," corresponds to "gracious and merciful."—Ver. 6 lays down the basis on which rests the declaration of the happiness of the compassionate and righteous man, inasmuch as it describes his salvation. The לזכר עולם corresponds to the לעולם, the צדיק to the לא ימוט. Hence "he shall be just" refers to the walk, the conduct, as a just man,

a Ven.: "What a little ago he hath expressed metaphorically, he now expresses literally, when he pronounces the man to be happy."

For eternal remembrance is equivalent to *for all future time, so long as men can remember any thing.—Before evil intelligence*, ver. 7,—when so grounded he well may. *He is not afraid*, he *need* not be afraid because he has in God the sure ground of his salvation. On נכון *firm* = *fearless*, comp. at Ps. li. 10.[a]—The סמוך, properly *propped*, in ver. 8, refers back to Ps. cxi. 8, firm in his heart, in reliance upon the firmness of the commandments of God, and of the *promises* connected with them for their faithful observers. On the second clause comp. Ps. liv. 7. Confidence in hope ceases when sight enters. The עד is to be taken in an exclusive sense.—On the פזר in ver. 9 comp. Prov. xi. 24. It denotes the plentifulness of the giving. On account of the preterite, and because the expression, *his righteousness endureth for ever*, cannot occur a second time in the same sense (comp. ver. 3), the two first clauses refer to the *conduct*, and the third to the *recompense*. The *righteousness* is that which gives to every one his own, to the poor charity. On "his horn shall be exalted," comp. Ps. lxxv. 4, xcii. 10. In *honour*, in spite of all the attempts of the enemies to cover him with shame.—In ver. 10, in consequence of the circumstances of the times, we are to think of *heathen wickedness*, or the *wicked* represents heathenism in hostility to the kingdom of God, the world, compare Ps. cvii. 42, *He gnashes with his teeth*, Ps. xxxv. 16, xxxvii. 12, in impotent rage. And *melts away*, Ps. lxviii. 2. In the last clause the *desire* of the wicked means the *object* of that desire; comp. Job viii. 13, Prov. x. 28.

PSALM CXIII.

The glorious name of the Lord shall be praised, ver. 1–3, in

[a] Arnd: "Look now at the examples,—how Moses says at the Red Sea, stand still and see, &c. How does Jehosaph stand firm as a wall when a hundred thousand men invade the land, and he slays them all with one song of praise! How firmly does David stand when hunted by Saul! How overwhelmed is Saul with despair when his land is invaded by the Philistines, and he seeks advice from a witch! What firmness is in Daniel when in the lion's den! What joy in Stephen! How did the holy Basilius say when Cæsar Valens threatened him so dreadfully: such Mormolykia should be set before children! Athanasius, when Julian persecuted him: he is a mist that will soon disappear."

whom condescension is most intimately connected with exaltation, ver. 4–6, who lovingly undertakes for the poor and the miserable, 7–9. Or: first the glory of the name of the Lord, then the point to which it here comes, first, generally, next, more particularly. Jo. Arnd: "God is particularly to be praised for this, that he takes compassion upon the miserable, graciously regards the humble, and undertakes for the forsaken."

The Psalm forming the conclusion of a trilogy, is wholly ruled by the number three; three strophes each of three verses, three times *praise* in ver. 1, three times the name of the Lord in ver. 1–3.

The object is to inspire with courage "the worm Jacob," Is. xli. 14, the miserable one, over whom all the world goes, Is. liv. 11, the poor little flock, after the captivity, by lifting up their hearts to their heavenly father, who visits in the loveliest manner the smallest dwellings. The Psalm has a *prophetic* character. For it points to a time "when the exaltation of the children of God shall take place, and their glory, which is now covered over with a bare cross, shall be revealed." Berleb. B.

Ver. 1–3.—Ver. 1. *Hallelujah. Praise, ye servants of the Lord, praise the name of the Lord.* Ver. 2. *May the name of the Lord be praised from henceforth even for ever.* Ver. 3. *From the rising of the sun to the going down of the same, glorious is the name of the Lord.—The servants of the Lord* are *the righteous*, Ps. cxi. 1, those who fear the Lord, ver. 5, his people, ver. 6. Comp. Ps. xxxiv. 22, lxix. 36, cxxxvi. 22, Es. v. 11, Neh. i. 10, "they are thy servants and thy people." The expression cannot without some addition be applied exclusively to the Levites. The appellation has respect to the obligation to praise, which is one of the main forms of the service of the heavenly Lord. The *name of the Lord* is the Lord according to his historical character. The *people* of God have the privilege of having a God whose name is the product of his deeds. The *world* which forms a God according to its own fancies, has a nameless God.—The removal of every limit of time in reference to the praise of the Lord in ver. 2, proceeds on the supposition that the Lord continues for ever to reveal his glorious nature, gives throughout eternity always new occasion to praise him. The wishing, resting as it does on this basis, has at the same time the charac-

ter of a prophecy. The responsive cry of praise shall succeed the cry of the deeds sounding throughout all eternity.—As מְהֻלָּל is always used as an epithet of God, *praised = glorious* (comp. at Ps. xviii. 3, xcvi. 4, cxlv. 3,—the Vulg. correctly *laudabile*), we cannot in ver. 3 supply "may be" out of ver. 2; the only word that can be supplied is "is." On "from the rising of the sun to its going down," comp. Ps. l. 1. "The Lord who rules over all quarters with his hands," who has made known his strength among the nations, Ps. lxxvii. 14, who crushed Rahab like one slain, Ps. lxxxix. 10, he, of whom it is said in Ps. lxxxix. 11, 12, "thine is the heaven, thine is also the earth, the earth and its fulness thou hast founded it, the north and the south thou has created, Tabor and Hermon rejoice in thy name," makes known his glory not only in one particular corner of the earth, but as far as the earth itself extends.

Ver. 4–6.—Ver. 4. *Exalted above all heathens is the Lord, in heaven is his glory.* Ver. 5. *Who is as the Lord our God, who placeth himself thus high.* Ver. 6. *And looketh thus down deep, in heaven and in earth.*—*Exalted is the Lord above all heathens*, ver. 4, (comp. Ps. xcix. 2), who are so proud and who oppress Israel so hardly, as the great king over the whole earth, Ps. xlvii. 2. "*Over* the heaven," instead of "in the heaven" (comp. at Ps. lvii. 5, cxlviii. 13), which itself tells his glory, Ps. xix. 1, where the sons of God gives him glory, Ps. xxix. 1, the strong heroes praise him, Ps. ciii. 20, 21, the Seraphim sing "holy, holy, holy," Is. vi. Several falsely: "*out* over heaven." That would be out into the empty void.—In ver. 5, 6, the literal translation is: *who exalts himself sitting, humbles himself looking*, compare Ew. § 280. On the Jod parag. at Ps. ciii. 3. The infin. with ל of both verbs, which are always used transitively, occupies the place of the accusative. The expression, "who places himself thus high," resumes the contents of ver. 4, in order to add to it the opposite, the deep humility and the condescension of God; compare on this at Ps. xviii. 35. Israel stands alone in all the old world as possessing a knowledge of this humility. Its foundation is seen in "I know that I am dust and ashes," which meets us in the mouth of Abraham at the very beginning of the nation. Is. lvii. 15, is parallel. Jo. Arnd: "All miserable people should keep this for their highest protection, and should eter-

nally thank God for this grace. For what enjoyment has the great God in those who are little? The high and lofty One in those who are low? The glorious God in those who are despised? The blessed God in those who are miserable?" The expression "in heaven and upon the earth," is usually considered as connected with what immediately precedes: who looks deep down upon what is in heaven and upon the earth. But the connection ought rather to be: who is like the Lord our God . . . . in heaven and upon the earth! For, according to the first view, "the things which are and are carried on" is arbitrarily supplied; what follows is manifestly an expansion in particulars of the general thought,—there, however, the discourse had been only of the care of God for the miserable upon the earth; the parallel passages are decisive in favour of the view here adopted: Deut. iii. 24, "who is a God in heaven and earth who does works like thine, and such as thy great deeds?" Ps. lxxiii. 25, "whom have I in heaven, and near thee I desire none upon the earth."

Ver. 7–9.—Ver. 7. *He raiseth up the poor out of the dust, and out of the dunghill he lifteth the needy man.* Ver. 8. *That he may set him near to princes, near to the princes of his people.* Ver. 9. *He makes the barren woman of the house to dwell like a joyful mother of children. Hallelujah.*—Ver. 7 and 8 are almost word for word from the prayer of Hannah, 1 Sam. ii. 8. The transition to the *people* is all the more natural as Hannah, considering herself at the conclusion as the type of the church with which every individual among the Israelites felt himself much more closely entwined than can easily be the case among ourselves, draws out of the salvation imparted to herself joyful prospects for the people. That "the poor man" and "the needy man" is not the people but only the type and representative of them is manifest from "with the nobles of the people." *Out of the dust,* compare Ps. xliv. 25. At ver. 8, Job xxxvi. 7. —In ver. 9, at which 1 Sam. ii. 5, is to be compared, "the barren woman beareth seven, and she that was rich in children hath waxed feeble," we cannot translate "who maketh the barren woman to dwell in the house." For the form of the stat. absol. is always עקרה, and even according to the accents we can only translate: the barren woman of the house; the הבית cannot be the accusative, for the language used does not refer to *one who is house-*

less, in which case Ps. lxviii. 6, would require to be compared, but to one who is *childless*, in regard to whom it is not the *that* but the *how* of the dwelling that comes into notice. The *barren woman of the house* was, for example, Hannah, while Peninah was the fruitful one, the type of the world. *The barren woman* appears also, in Is. liv. 1–3, as a type of the church of God in its misery, when the number of its members appears much diminished. It is all the more natural to contemplate the church under this emblem[a] as the types of Sarah, Rebecca, Rachel, the wife of Manoah, Hannah, whose long continued barrenness was removed by divine interposition, and finally of Mary, who brought forth altogether without the aid of a man, have manifestly a typical reference to the church.

The trilogy is followed by a tetralogy which forms along with it an heptade, so that it, along with the *Davidic* trilogy, forms a decade. In the trilogy the Hallelujah occurred four times, here in the tetralogy three times, at the conclusion of Ps. cxv., cxvi., cxvii.; thus in the whole heptade seven times.

PSALM CXIV.

The power of the world in the times immediately after the return from captivity stood constantly against the Church of God, like a raging sea, an overflowing river, a high hill, a bare barren rock. Those who *yielded to despair* in looking at this view, the Psalmist leads out of the present into the past, when the earth was compelled to humble itself before the God of Israel, the sea and Jordan overflowing all its banks turned back before him, Sinai moved in its firm foundations, the bare rock was made to send forth water, as a type of what is repeated in all ages, and which faith sees coming again into existence now when the circumstances are so similar to those of Israel when they came out of Egypt.

When Israel came out of Egypt, the Lord declared them to be his people by mighty deeds of omnipotence, ver. 1 and 2. The

[a] Arnd: "The barren woman is the poor, forsaken, distressed Christian church, whom the false church oppresses, defies, and persecutes, and regards as useless, miserable, barren, because she herself is greater and more populous, the greatest part of the world."

sea fled, Jordan gave way, mountains moved, ver. 3 and 4. The Psalmist addresses the sea, &c., and interrogates it as to the cause of this singular terror, ver. 5 and 6. He answers the question himself: the earth trembled before the Lord, who is the God of Israel, and who caused water to come out from the rock, and salvation from places most unlikely to give salvation to his people, ver. 7 and 8.

As the preceding Psalm forming the conclusion of the trilogy is wholly ruled by the number three, so this one opening the tetralogy and the fourth in the heptade is wholly ruled by the number four, the signature of the earth, ver. 7. It has four strophes each of four members. Of the great deeds of the Lord which are represented in it as pledges of similar deliverance at the present time, there are *four* which, along with the *three* made mention of in Ps. cxi. which opens the trilogy, make up seven.

The assertion of some recent expositors, that the Psalm before us must be a passover-hymn, rests on no ground. The facts which are celebrated, the yielding of the sea, &c., are not directly connected with the passover.

Ver. 1, 2.—Ver. 1. *When Israel came out of Egypt, the house of Jacob from a people of strange language.* Ver. 2. *Then was Judah his sanctuary, Israel his dominion.*—The departure from Egypt in ver. 1 is to be taken in a wide sense; for the facts made mention of in what follows go on as far as the entrance into Canaan. The clause, "from the people of a strange language," points to the oppressive character of the previous abode, the beneficent character of the departure; comp. at the parallel passage, Ps. lxxxi. 5. As then, so now, Israel went out from a people of strange language, a people of whom it was said in Deut. xxviii. 49, "the Lord shall raise up against thee a people from afar . . . whose language thou dost not understand." They must now see a similar confirmation of their election.—In ver. 2 the discourse is not of an elevation of Israel to the rank of children of God taking place in *words*, but of one in *deeds*. This is evident from what follows, where the manner in which this elevation ensues is more particularly described, viz. by the opening up of the way through the Red Sea, &c. The *verbal* declaration took place at Sinai, where the Lord said to Israel: "ye shall be to me a kingdom of priests and a holy people." We

cannot, however, think of this; for the passage through the Red Sea had taken place *previously*. Judah represents here the whole people, as Joseph had done in Ps. lxxxi. 5. The whole is denoted from that branch which at the time was still flourishing, from that part which was the heir of all ancient reminiscences (comp. at Ps. lxxvi. 1), and to which the prophecies concealed in facts were yet to be fulfilled. The connection of Judah with the feminine cannot here be explained from the circumstance that the land is used instead of the people—for Judah had at that time no land—but from the frequent personification of communities as women or as virgins, for example, the daughter of Tyre, in Ps. xlv. 12, the daughter of Edom, Lam. iv. 21, the daughter of my people, Is. xxii. 4. As the holiness of God denotes his separation from all created being (comp. at Ps. xxii. 3), the choice of Israel to the *sanctuary* or *holy place of God* denotes his separation from the world, and his reception into the territory of God; comp. Deut. vii. 6, Ex. xix. 5, 6, Christol. 3, p. 431. From the circumstance that the suffixes refer to the Lord, and that the name of the Lord had not previously been mentioned, it has been improperly concluded that the Psalm is more closely connected than it really is with Ps. cxiii., and that it makes up along with it, in a certain measure, one whole. He who is always present to the mind of the godly, does not require on every occasion to be expressly named. Psalm 87th also begins with the words: "*his* (city) founded on the holy mountains." The position of the bare suffix in the passage arises from a particular reason. The questions in ver. 5 and 6 would have been anticipated and their appropriateness destroyed, had the Lord been previously mentioned by name as the cause of these great deeds. In the plural *his dominions, his states*, it is implied that no other people enjoyed such a preference. The rubric, "states of God," was exemplified in Israel alone. The discourse here is only of *the kingdom of grace*. "Thus shall Judah even now be anew raised to the dignity of the sanctuary and of the dominion of the Lord," stands in the back-ground.

Ver. 3, 4.—Ver. 3. *The sea saw and fled, and Jordan, and turned back.* Ver. 4. *The mountains skipped like rams, the hills like lambs.*—On ver. 3, comp. Ex. xiv. 21, Jos. iii. 14–16. "The sea and the Jordan of the heathen world shall in like man-

ner flow back at the present time," stands in the back ground. Compare on the sea and rivers as the emblems of the powers of the world, at Ps. xciii., cvii. 23, ss.—Ver. 4 depends, as to expression, on Ps. xxix. 6, but as to the reality upon Ex. xix. 18, "and the whole mountain trembled very much;" comp. Ps. lxviii. 8, "then the earth moved, the heavens also dropped before God, it was at Sinai, before the God of Israel," Jud. v. 4, ss., "O Lord, when thou didst march out from Seir, when you did go forward from the field of Edom, the earth quaked
the mountains flowed down before the Lord." The assertion, "it must be merely taken poetically," is shewn to be a ridiculous one by these passages. The analogy of the three other facts is left unnoticed, and the consideration that it is not a poetic fiction, but only historical facts, that can be appropriate here, is overlooked; everywhere throughout the Psalm the past is employed as allegorical of the future. On the mountains, as symbols of the kingdoms of the world, which the Psalmist sees move along with Sinai, comp. at Ps. lxxvi. 4.[a] In Zech. iv. 7, "who art thou, O great mountains, before Zerubabel? Become a plain!" the great mountain is the Persian kingdom which hindered the building of the temple.

Ver. 5, 6.—Ver. 5. *What is the matter with thee, thou sea, that thou fleest, O Jordan, that thou turnest back?* Ver. 6. *Ye mountains that ye leap like rams, ye hills, like lambs?*—We cannot translate "what was the matter with thee that thou didst flee?" The constant use of the future is against this, as is also the trembling in the seventh verse, which supposes that the action is not completed. The Psalmist brings the whole scene out of the past into the present, in which he expects to see it again repeated.

Ver. 7, 8.—Ver. 7. *Before the Lord tremble thou earth, before the God of Jacob.* Ver. 8. *Who changes the rock into water, the hard stone into a fountain of water.*—The Psalmist himself replies to the question addressed to the sea, &c.: shall I say so to you? Thou earth with thy sea, &c. We cannot translate: "before the Lord tremble thou *still more*," for in this case,

a Berleb.: "Sinai and Horeb, together with the neighbouring mountains, leapt as it were by the mighty earthquake when the Lord descended to give the law, and the kingdoms shall be also thrown into a mighty movement when the Lord shall come to judgment to execute his law."

the question propounded in the previous strophe would remain unanswered, and the eighth verse is also against it, for it still refers to the events of the Mosaic time, as prophetic of the future. We are to comp. at ver. 7 and ver. 4, Ps. xcvii. 4, 5.—On ver. 8 comp. Ex. xvii. 6, Num. xx. 11, Deut. viii. 15, xxxii. 13. The words contain a general thought which, however, is expressed in language borrowed from the facts of the Mosaic time, and of which a similar application is made in Is. xli. 18, xliii. 2: who sends continually to his church water out of the hard rock, causes salvation to arise in most unfavourable circumstances, so that the power of the world rises against it in vain.

PSALM CXV.

After an Introduction, ver. 1, in which the Lord is called upon to vindicate the honour of his name, which was endangered by the miserable condition of his people, the Psalmist contrasts with each other, in ver. 2–4, the God of Israel, who is in heaven, and who does all things according to his own will, and the heathen deities, silver and gold, the work of men's hands, and describes at length the nothingness and feebleness of the latter, a description which applies to their worshippers, in ver. 5–8. There rises in ver. 9–11, on the basis thus laid, the exhortation to Israel to trust in the Lord his God, and the confident assurance that he will *bless* the people, ver. 12–15,—He, who has given the earth to men, and cannot suffer his people to be rooted out from it, or himself to be deprived of praise, ver. 16–18.

The Psalm falls into a strophe of seven and one of ten verses. The seven is divided by the three and the four, the ten by the seven (which again falls into three and four) and the three. Jehovah occurs ten times, Jah twice—in all, therefore, the names of God twelve times.

The idea that the Psalm was sung by alternate choruses is without any proper foundation. By the Sept., the Syr., the Vulg., and in several MSS., the Psalm is, without and against all reason, joined to the preceding one, so that the two together may form one whole.

The Psalm was composed at a time when the *name of God*, the renown of his faithfulness and mercy towards his people,

which he had acquired by his early deeds, was *exposed to danger*, ver. 1, when the heathen could say in triumph, "Where is now their God?" when, in the relation in which Israel stood to the heathen, it was only the consideration of the *back-ground* which was concealed from the fleshly eye that could afford consolation, ver. 3 ss., when there was still only a small number of people, when the thought of destruction, as far as could be seen, was one which was not very remote, and which required to be combated in faith, ver. 16–18, but when the Lord still remembered his people, ver. 12, and by the commencement of deliverance which had taken place had given a foundation on which the hope of complete restoration might rest. All those features suit exactly the time in which we have placed the whole cycle of Psalms to which the one before us belongs, the time, viz., immediately after the captivity. The prominent position occupied by the *priests* leads us also to the period after the captivity. These appear, in every allusion made to them, as the leaders of the people. The concurrence of priesthood and royalty has disappeared.

Ver. 1. *Not to us, O Lord, not to us, but to thy name give glory, because of thy mercy, because of thy truth.*—The name of God is his fame, Num. xiv. 15, his *praise* which he has acquired by his former deeds, Is. xlviii. 9, and which he cannot now give up. The *mercy* and *the truth* of God, the manifestations of which form the main ingredients of his name, form the moving and impelling principle in God, which leads him to give glory to his name. As the deeds have proceeded from these, the remembrance of which forms the name, in like manner it is by them that those new deeds must be called forth, which are necessary to prevent the dishonouring of the name. Were God not good nor true, there would be no obligation upon him to guard against a false report. In reference to the name of God, comp. at the parallel passage, Ps. lxxix. 9. The "not to us," &c., is equivalent to "not to our merits and claims," or "not because of us;" comp. Dan. ix. 18, "not for our righteousnesses, but for thy great compassion," Is. xliii. 22–25, "thou hast not honoured me, O Jacob, &c., I, even I, forgive your transgressions for my own sake," xlviii. 11. The expression is emphatically repeated for the purpose of conveying the impression that Israel is deeply

sensible that there is nothing in him which can call forth salvation.[a] On the *truth* of God at Ps. xxx. 9, liv. 5.

Ver. 2–8.—Ver. 2.—*Why should the heathen say, where is now their God?* Ver. 3. *Our God is in heaven, he does whatever he pleases.* Ver. 4. *Their gods are silver and gold, the work of men's hands.* Ver. 4. *Mouths have they and they speak not, eyes have they and they see not.* Ver. 5. *Ears have they and they hear not, noses have they and they smell not.* Ver. 7. *Their hands do not handle, their feet do not walk, they do not speak through their throat.* Ver. 8. *Like to them are those who make such, all who trust in them.*—Ver. 2 is literally from Ps. lxxix. 10. It is impossible to doubt that the clause is borrowed, as of the contents of the verse which ought properly to be provided with inverted commas, it is only the *assertion* of the heathen, not the expression "why should they say so," that is illustrated by the contrast drawn between the God of Israel and the gods of the heathen—a contrast which exhibits in all its pitiableness their cry, "Where is their God?" As the God of Israel is *omnipotence* and their idols *feebleness*, "where is their God" will in due time descend with terror on their own heads; and the man in the congregation of the Lord would be stupid indeed who should pay any regard to it. A God such as Israel's may conceal himself for a time, and give the world the joy of a fancied victory, but he must always again come out of his concealment in the full glory of his being.—*Our God is in heaven*, ver. 3 (comp. at Ps. ii. 4, xi. 4, ciii. 19), far exalted above the earth, the place of feebleness, above the heathen and their idol-trash. On the second clause comp. Gen. xviii. 14, where even at the very beginning of revelation we find uttered, "is any thing too hard for the Lord?" The parallel passage for ver. 4, the basis, and ver. 5, the development, is Deut. iv. 28, "and ye serve these Gods, *the work of men's hands*, wood and stone (here silver

a Calvin: This beginning shews that the faithful, in cases of extremity, flee to God. They do not, however, say in express words what they wish, but indirectly insinuate their request. In the meantime they declare, by way of preface, that they do not adduce any merits of their own or deserve the hope of obtaining what they want from any other source except from this, that God in delivering them promotes his own glory. . . . . They are indeed desirous to obtain consolation and aid in their misery, but because they find nothing in themselves worthy of the divine favour, they appeal to him to vindicate his own glory.

and gold), which see not, and eat not, and smell not," and are thus inferior to the stupid men who trust in them. Our passage is the *locus classicus* in the Psalms on the subject of idols, corresponding to the one in the prophets, viz., Is. xliv. 9-20. It has been maintained that the place which the Psalmist assigns to the heathen idol-worship is a false one. "The Jew, accustomed to no image of the godhead, adopts the error (often intentionally) of considering the idols of the heathen as their gods, whereas they were only symbols of their gods." But the Psalmist has to do not with the *view* which the heathen took of their gods, but with the thing itself. And in reality and apart from the vain imaginations of their worshippers (seen to be such by their changing character), the heathen gods had no existence beyond that of the images; compare at Ps. xcv. 3, xcvi. 5. Further, it has been maintained that the whole description is "feeble by its oneness of tone." It is only so, however, in so far as we do not vividly transfer ourselves into the age in which the Psalms were composed, an age in which, with the exception of one small corner, the whole world did homage to these miserable gods, and in which what now appears trivial and self-evident went in the face of the consent of the whole human race. If any one will keep in view, throughout the whole description, the refined worship of the present age, which, in reality, is the same in substance as the grosser idolatry of ancient times —whether the idols be formed of silver and gold or of thoughts and feelings is a matter of indifference—he will find the description to be full of life and interest.—On ver. 5 and 6 compare the opposite description of Jehovah in Ps. xciv. 9, "He who has planted the ear," &c.—In ver. 7 the ידיהם and the רגליהם are nomin. absol. On הגה, *to murmur, to whisper*, comp. at Ps. xc. 9. The *whispering* stands opposed to loud and strong discourse; Michaelis: *They cannot even whisper.—Like to them are those who make them*, ver. 8,—just as null and feeble, inasmuch without strength they fall from on high and under the judgment of omnipotence. Even though it may appear on a superficial view to be otherwise for a time, yet it remains eternally true, and shall always be confirmed anew by the results: every one is just what his God is; whoever serves the Omnipotent is omnipotent with him: whoever exalts feebleness, in stupid delusion, to be his god,

is feeble along with that god. This is an important preservative against fear for those who are sure that they worship the true God. Berleb.: "*Are like them*, and therefore richly deserve to be treated with insult, when they have the heart to scoff at others who desire to trust in God, and to adhere to him." The expression "who make them" refers naturally not so much to the artificers as to those who get the images made.

Ver. 9-18.—Ver. 9. *Israel, trust thou in the Lord, who is your help and your shield.* Ver. 10. *Ye of the house of Aaron trust in the Lord, who is your help and your shield.* Ver. 11. *Ye who fear the Lord, trust in the Lord, who is your help and your shield.* Ver. 12. *The Lord hath been mindful of us, he shall bless, he shall bless the house of Israel, he shall bless the house of Aaron.* Ver. 13. *He shall bless those who fear the Lord, the small with the great.* Ver. 14. *May the Lord add to you, to you and to your children.* Ver. 15. *May ye be blessed of the Lord, the creator of heaven and earth.*—Ver. 16. *The heaven is heaven for the Lord, and the earth he has given to the sons of man.* Ver. 17. *The dead praise not the Lord, nor those who go down to silence.* Ver. 18. *And we will praise the Lord from henceforth even for ever.*—Ver. 9 depends upon Ps. xxxiii. 20, "Our soul trusteth in the Lord, he is our help and our shield."—In ver. 10, the house of Aaron is specially named, because it was proper that it should go forward at the head of the people in the way of trusting in the Lord. —By "those who fear the Lord," ver. 11, we cannot, either here or in the parallel passages, Ps. cxviii. 4, cxxxv. 20, understand either the *proselytes*, unsuitably referring to the φοβούμενοι τὸν θεὸν of the New Testament, or the *laity*, but only *the whole people.* This is evident from ver. 13, where by the *great* are manifestly meant, by way of pre-eminence, the *priests;* these, therefore, must be included among the fearers of God. The expression also is used with reference to the whole of Israel in Ps. cxii. 1; comp. Ps. xxii. 23, where "the fearers of God" stand parallel to "the seed of *Jacob.*" The particular is thus enclosed on both sides by the general. The peculiarity, however, of our verse, in connection with the 9th, lies in the term employed to designate the general; in which there is indirectly contained a *basis* for the exhortation to trust in the Lord. This trust

is intimately connected with child-like fear of God, reverential awe before him. The man, therefore, who has a right to bear the name of a fearer of the Lord, who does not wish to excommunicate himself from the people of the Lord, must yield obedience to the exhortation of the Psalmist. A commentary on the short and hasty expression, "he hath been mindful of us," is furnished by Ps. cxvi. 18, according to which a great deliverance had just been imparted to the people of the Lord; comp. Ps. cvii. The cry "remember me, O Lord," which the church had uttered in captivity, is now about to be fulfilled.—*The small with the great*, ver. 13, the low who give way so easily to despondency no less than the high; comp. Jer. xvi. 6, 2 Kings xviii. 24, Rev. xiii. 16, xix. 5, Matth. xviii. 6.—Ver. 14 depends upon Deut. i. 11; "may the Lord God of your fathers *add to you* a thousand fold, and bless you as he hath blessed you." This passage, which again depends upon Gen. xxx. 24, and to which Joab alludes in 2 Sam. xxiv. 3, shews that we can neither dispense with the optative (and there is the less reason for this, as behind the wish there is still a prophecy concealed), nor refer the multiplying to the blessing instead of the number of the people as Luther does: "the Lord bless you more and more." For the aggregate body of the church of to the Lord (comp. Ps. cxix. 87, "they have almost annihilated me in the land") increase of numbers is one of the forms of blessing. The "you and your children" indicates that the multiplying shall begin immediately but shall be more glorious afterwards. It became most glorious in Christ, comp. Is. x. 16.—Ver. 15 alludes to the blessing of Melchisedec upon Abraham, Gen. xiv. 19, which was uttered in him on behalf of his posterity. The *Creator of heaven and earth*,—who, as such, is infinitely rich in blessing for his people, in assistance in all troubles, and against all even the most powerful enemies:—As an addition to the expression, "Creator of heaven and earth," the Psalmist, in ver. 16, draws from the fact that God, retaining only heaven for himself, has given up as a free gift, rich in love, the earth to the children of men (comp. Gen. i. 28, "And God blessed them, and God said unto them, Be fruitful and multiply, and replenish the earth and possess it," chap. ix. 1), a ground of consolation in view of the circumstances which threatened destruction to the people of

God: he cannot therefore permit it to be robbed of the occupants assigned to it by him, to be depopulated (comp. Hab. i. 14–17), assuredly not that the *choicest* of the children of men should disappear from the earth.—He shall rather maintain us, is added in ver. 17, 18, because he would otherwise be robbed of the song of praise which only his church on the earth can give him,—the *people* of God cannot die, because the *praise* of God would die with them, which would be impossible. In ver. 18, "we shall bless" is equivalent to "he shall give us the opportunity to do so, inasmuch as he *maintains us in life*, blesses us, ver. 12 and 13, *in deeds*, in order that thus we may bless him with *our lips*; comp. Ps. cxviii. 17, "I shall not die, but live and make known the deeds of the Lord." "And we shall" is in reality equivalent to "we shall *thus*." The other constructions of the two verses, such as that which finds them containing a praise of "the grace of God which gives the earth to men in opposition to the miserable inhabitants of the lower world who cannot praise him," are set aside by the circumstance that the position that the dead do not praise the Lord is everywhere else represented to the Lord as a reason for him to deliver from death; comp. Ps. vi. 5, xxx. 9, lxxxviii. 10–12, Is. xxxviii. 18, 19. The passage before us can scarcely be separated from these very striking parallel passages, as it belongs to such a late author, who is not to be supposed to strike out a path entirely new. In reference to the דוּמָה *silence*, comp. at Ps. xciv. 17.

PSALM CXVI.

After an Introduction, ver. 1 and 2, in which the Psalmist declares his love to the Lord, and his resolution to call upon him continually because he has been delivered by him out of great trouble, he describes in the first strophe this deliverance, ver. 3–9, and in the second his thankfulness. The first strophe is complete in the number seven, which is divided by a four and a three: I was near destruction, then the Lord manifested his compassion and his grace in my deliverance, ver. 3–6, so that now I am delivered from trouble and death, and have reached to my rest, ver.

7–9.[a] The second strophe is compound of ten, which is divided by a three and a seven, which last is divided by a three and a four. I placed in my trouble my trust in the Lord, and the Lord has given me according to my faith, how shall I recompense him for his gift? ver. 10–12. I will offer to him out of a full heart praise and thanks, ver. 13-19, in ver. 13–15 the resolution, ver. 16–19 apparently the accompaniment of the giving of the offerings.

The 117th Psalm, which, on account of its brevity, cannot with propriety be considered as occupying an entirely independent position, corresponds, as a *Conclusion*, to the *Introduction*, consisting like it of two verses. The whole in this case has twenty-one verses, three times seven. In Ps. cxvi., Jehovah occurs fifteen times, in Ps. cxvii. twice, in both together therefore we have the important number seventeen. Without the introduction and conclusion Jehovah occurs fourteen times. In the first strophe of Ps. cxvi. six times, in the second eight times. The six is supplemented by the Jehovah of the Introduction to seven, the eight by the conclusion, Ps. cxvii. to ten.

After the church of the Lord has raised itself to hope in his assistance in regard to every thing which at present oppresses her, she comes at the conclusion of the decade with delivered and lightened mind to her song of thanks for the favour already imparted, which now for the first time reaches its true earnestness when she has cast all her care upon the Lord.

That the Psalm does not belong to the times before the captivity, is manifest from the *language*, especially from the נגדה and the המורתה, with the meaningless paragoge in ver. 14 and 15, and the Chald. suffix in ver. 12. The danger from which the Psalmist giving thanks was delivered is repeatedly and expressly described as one of *entire destruction*,—a description in which it is impossible not to recognise a reference to the Babylonish captivity, as the analogy of all the other Psalms of the group, the 15th ver., where the plurality concealed behind the unity comes prominently forward (the speaker is the Man of Judah or the Daughter of Zion, therefore an ideal person), and the circum-

[a] The Septuagint and Vulgate recognised the main division to be after ver. 9; they have divided the Psalm at ver. 10 into two poems.

stance of the Psalm which manifestly receive a historical interpretation, being without a parallel, which does not readily occur in individual Psalms), render it impossible not to see the national character of the Psalm. A special reference to the deliverance from captivity occurs in "thou hast loosed my bonds" of ver. 16; comp. Ps. cvii. 14. The melancholy character of the joy also, which it is impossible not to notice, is suitable to the occasion: we every where see tears in the eyes of the thankful Psalmist; thanksgiving suppresses lamentation. The Psalm must at all events have been composed *shortly* after the deliverance. This is evident from the circumstance that the deliverance is the object of the festive presentation of thank offerings, also from the great tenderness of feeling, in consequence of which the expressions are somewhat of a stammering character, and, finally, from the present יְרוּשָׁלִַם in ver. 6. The mention of the *house of the Lord* in ver. 19, does not necessarily bring us down to the time after the completion of the building of the temple. For the holy city got this name before this, comp. Ezr. ii. 68, iii. 8. The Psalm however, was certainly sung for the first time after the setting up of public worship, ver. 13, ss., and on an occasion of national thanksgiving,—an occasion later than that assigned to Ps. cvii.; comp. the Introduction to that Psalm. Particulars will be obtained from Ps. cxviii.

Ver. 1 and 2.—Ver. 1. *I love, because the Lord hears my voice and my supplication.* Ver. 2. *For he inclined his ear to me, therefore I will call upon him as long as I live.*—In ver. 1 the future denotes the general truth, which is to be illustrated by the special fact (the preterite in ver. 2). The translation which, after the example of Luther, is commonly given, is: this is delightful to me that the Lord hears my voice. But in favour of the translation given above, the beginning of Ps. xviii. is decisive: "I love thee with my heart, O Lord, my strength." "For the Lord hears," &c., in the Psalm before us corresponds to "my trength," in that Psalm, and to the development of that expression which immediately follows. This conclusion is all the tronger, as the main division of our Psalm begins with the words with which that Psalm opens. Hence it follows, that, according to our view, the first verse contains the quintessence of the whole Psalm (comp. the view given above of the contents), and that the

first clause corresponds to the second half of ver. 2, exactly as the second clause corresponds to the first half. The abrupt clause, "I love," is altogether appropriate to the general character of the Psalm; comp. the similar clause, "I will call," in ver. 2, "the Lord gifts thee," ver. 7, and also the asyndeton, "my voice, my supplication," in the verse before us. There appears to be an allusion to Deut vi. 5, and to the parallel passage, "thou shalt love, אהבת, the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy strength." The Psalmist testifies that, by the proofs which he had received of the love of God, the fulfilment of this the first and great commandment had become possible to him. In reality, "I love," put by the Psalmist into the lips of the people, has, at the same time, a *hortatory* character; let us love him because he has first loved us.—It is manifest from Is. xxxix. 8, that "in my days," in ver. 2, is to be understood as equivalent to "my life long." *I will call upon*, giving thanks for his salvation, ver. 13, and praying in all distresses for his assistance, ver. 4.

Ver. 3–9.—Ver. 3. *The snares of death surrounded me, and the pains of hell found me, I found distress and sorrow.* Ver. 4. *But I called upon the name of the Lord: O Lord, deliver my soul!* Ver. 5. *Gracious is the Lord and upright, and our God is compassionate.* Ver. 6. *The Lord defends the simple, I was in sorrow and he delivered me.* Ver. 7. *Return again, O my soul, to thy rest, for the Lord hath gifted thee.* Ver. 8. *For thou didst deliver my soul from death, mine eyes from tears, my foot from sliding.* Ver. 9. *I shall walk before the Lord in the land of the living.*—Ver. 3 depends upon Ps. xviii. 4, 5. It is not without design that the church, in the description of her trouble, connects herself with David. He was her great example in distress and deliverance. In Ps. 18 he himself extends his own experience to that of his seed, who, at the time of the composition of this Psalm, was represented by Zerubabel (comp. Hag. ii. 23, Zech. iv.), and, in a certain measure, included in him the whole people; for it was intended that David should for all eternity, be the soul of the people.—*To call upon the name of the Lord*, in ver. 4, is a stronger expression than merely to call upon the Lord, and is equivalent to, to call upon him in his historically manifested glory.—*Upright* is the

Lord, ver. 5, just because he is gracious and compassionate towards his own people; comp. Ps. cxii. 4. Allusion is made to the fundamental definition of the divine Being in the Law, which had in this instance been so gloriously verified: the idea meant to be conveyed is: as the Lord has delivered my soul, and thus confirmed the truth of his word, which calls him gracious and compassionate. Instead of narrating historically the consequences of the prayer, the Psalmist breaks out into praise of the grace and mercy of God therein made known.—On פתי, in ver. 6, comp. at Ps. xix. 7. The word denotes, in the first instance, a failing, a want, not a virtue (many translate altogether without good reason: that pure mind towards God which alone expects salvation from him), yet assuredly this want is more praiseworthy than the false skill of the world, which always knows to help itself, because it considers every thing to be lawful.[a] The full form, יהושיע, was probably chosen for the purpose of alluding to the significant name of the first high priest of the new colony, Joshua.—The imper. in ver. 7 stands as in Is. lv. 1, invites to the enjoyment of the blessings freely furnished by God. The מנוח, possibly *a place of rest*, is never inward rest and peace (Luther: Be now at peace, O my soul)—the plural is against this—but the *outward* rest. The מנוחות in Ps. xxiii. 2 also refers to this, and in Matth. xi. 29 the rest is the place of rest. The rest for the soul is the land of the Lord, the temple, the building of which was just begun, the delightful home, together with every thing which it affords for refreshment to the weary wanderer. Hitherto the soul had been restless and wandering like Cain, Gen. iv. 12. On גמל comp. at Ps. vii. 4. We may supply "with thy rest," or, what is better, with every thing that is good, comp. ver. 12.[b]—Ver. 8 and 9 depend upon Ps. lvi. 13;

a The sense of פתאים was given with perfect accuracy by Calvin: "This word is frequently taken in a bad sense for inconsiderate and foolish persons who do not obey right counsel. But now those are called simple who suffer injuries, who are not too skilful in avoiding injuries, who, in fine, are easily circumvented, whereas the children of this world are as strong in sagacity as they are well furnished with expedients for protecting themselves. David therefore confesses himself to be like a child who cannot advise himself, and is not able to repel those injuries to which he is exposed. The same is, when believers, in their sufferings, have neither skill nor reason to find out means of escape, God's wisdom is used on their behalf, and the secret guardianship of his providence meets all the dangers which beset their safety."

b The pious Bishop Babylas of Antioch comforted himself with our verse in prospect

"For thou didst deliver my soul from death, my feet from sliding, that I may walk before God in the light of the living." Even this reference pre-supposes the character of David as an exemplar. The inserted clause, "my eyes from tears," contains a designed and a most significant allusion to Jer. xxxi. 16. The promise there given, as to the drying up of tears, was now in the way of being fulfilled. Instead of "in the *light* of the living," we have here "in the land" (Ezr. iii. 3); comp. "in the land of the living," in Ps. xxvii. 13, lii. 5.

Ver. 10-19.—Ver. 10. *I believed, therefore I did speak, but I was very much plagued.* Ver. 11. *I said, in my alarm: all men lie.* Ver. 12. *How shall I now recompense the Lord for all his gifts to me?* Ver. 13. *I will take the cup of salvation, and call upon the name of the Lord.* Ver. 14. *I will pay my vows to the Lord, yea, before all his people.* Ver. 15. *Precious in the eyes of the Lord is the death of his saints.*—Ver. 16. *O Lord, for I am thy servant, the son of thy handmaid, thou hast loosed my bonds.* Ver. 17. *I will bring thank-offerings to thee, and call upon the name of the Lord.* Ver. 18. *I will pay my vows to the Lord, yea, before all his people.* Ver. 19. *In the courts of the house of the Lord, in thee, Jerusalem, Halleluja.* —The whole second part is occupied with the *thanks*, as the first part is with the *salvation*. Ver. 10 and 11 serve only as a preparation for the question in ver. 12. *I believed*, ver. 10, after the example of Abraham, Gen. xv. 6, and of David, in Ps. xxvii. 13. The הָאֲמַנְתִּי is absolute, just as it is in Is. vii. 9. The Psalmist, however, has no intention of boasting of his faith, but of giving glory to the Lord who had given him according to his faith. *For I did speak*,—which is a sure proof of the presence of faith. Confession and faith are inseparably connected;[a] comp. 2 Cor. iv. 13. The Apostle places, after the example of the Septuagint, *therefore* instead of *for*: "I believed, *therefore* I spake," without any material alteration of the sense. What the church of the Lord did speak may be gathered from "I believed" (it was what

of the martyrdom which he suffered under Decius. "From this we learn that our soul comes to rest when it is removed by a happy death from this restless world."

a Calvin: Hence we draw a useful doctrine, that faith cannot exist inopperative in the heart, but must rise into action. For the Spirit connects, by a sacred bond, faith of the heart with external confession: "what God hath joined together, let not man put asunder."

was according to the faith), and is particularly described in ver. 11. The future denotes the past time just as the אמצא in ver. 3 and the אקרא in ver. 4. "I was very much plagued," gives the circumstances in which the faith, and speaking which followed it, existed: immediately upon this, the substance of what was said is particularly given in ver. 11. According to the construction of the verse, דברי here and אמר in ver. 11 stand in their usual relation to each other; comp. at Ps. iv. 4.[a] This relation is not attended to in the translation: "I believed although I said; or when I said: *I am very much plagued.*" These senses of כי, moreover, are nowhere to be found. In Ex. xiii. 17, to which reference has been made for the sense "although," the כי is simply "because." That the way through the land of the Philistines was short, was precisely the reason why Moses did not choose it. Israel needed a longer preparation. Luther has committed a mistake in substituting the present throughout in room of the preterite: I believe, therefore I spake, but I am very much plagued.—In ver. 11, "in my alarm" (properly "in my haste," the peculiar expression from Ps. xxxi. 22), resumes "I was very much afflicted;" I said in my alarm, the alarm induced by that severe affliction; and also "I said *all men lie*," that is, disappoint the trust placed in them, leave in the lurch those who hope in them (comp. Ps. lxii. 9, cviii. 12), resumes, "I believed for I spoke." From the circumstance that the speaking here is the expression of the *faith*, the exact import of the words spoken becomes apparent; it is obvious that behind the negative there is concealed the positive: I place my hope and confidence not in deceitful men, but on my true and faithful God; comp. Ps. cviii. 8, "it is better to trust in the Lord than to put confidence in men."—In ver. 12, exactly as in ver. 5, the sequence is not expressly mentioned but presupposed: *it happened to me according to my faith, how then shall I?*—In ver. 13 *the cup of salvation* (the plural denotes the fulness and the variety of the salvation), is a figurative representation of the salvation which had been *imparted to* the Psalmist. He will with this, laying it to heart, come before God, and after the example of Abraham, who did so after every great instance of deliverance, call upon the name of the Lord, the only recompense

[a] Gesen. on the word דבר: "For דבר is rarely so placed that the words which are reported follow immediately, and לאמר is to be supplied mentally."

which poor man can render to God. The cup is a frequent figurative representation of what is allotted to each man, his fortune, good fortune, Ps. xvi. 5, xxiii. 5, and bad fortune, Ps. xi. 6, lxxv. 8, and at Ps. lx. 3. No reference whatever can be understood as made to the cup of thanksgiving at the thank-offering, or to the sacrificial feast connected with it. For this cup is a mere fiction.—On the נָא in ver. 14 comp. Ewald, § 246. It is here also a particle expressive of wish, and contains in it "my soul forget not."—Ver. 15 points to the ground why the Psalmist considers himself laid under a sacred obligation to give thanks: for dear to the Lord—this he has shewn by my deliverance from death—is the death of his saints (instead of he regards it as important); hence the obligation to bring to him praise and thanks. The words depend upon Ps. lxxii. 14.[a]—The אָנָּה in ver. 16 is very tender, *O yet*, Ew. § 262. He prays for permission to give thanks, and considers such permission a great favour, which God, however, imparts to his people along with their *election* and their *deliverance*. God must surely permit his servant and his redeemed to give him thanks, he has himself given him this privilege, and in point of fact, by his deeds, has exhorted him to do so. On "the son of the handmaid" comp. at Ps. lxxxvi. 16.

PSALM CXVII.

COMPARE THE INTRODUCTION TO PS. CXVI.

Ver. 1. *Praise the Lord, all ye heathens, praise him all ye nations.* Ver. 2. *For his mercy over us was great, and the truth of the Lord endureth for ever. Hallelujah.*—On exhortations addressed to the *heathen* to praise the Lord on account of his great deeds on behalf of Israel, comp. at Ps. xlvii. 1, lxvi. 8, xcviii. 4. *His truth endureth for ever*—as the present instance shows. The emphatic way in which the salvation of the Lord is here spoken of, takes for granted that a full description of that salvation had preceded.

a Calvin: "When we are brought into danger by the permission of God, the thought steals upon us that we are neglected like vile slaves, and that our life is regarded as nothing."

PSALM CXVIII.

The exhortation to praise the Lord because of his mercy towards Israel, ver. 1–4, is followed by a reference to that good deed which had led on to this praise (the Lord has delivered his people out of great trouble), and there is then annexed the expression of unlimited confidence in him, ver. 6–14, who, with the same omnipotent mercy with which he has at the present time come to the help of his people when threatened with destruction, will lead them on to full victory over the heathen world, which still continues to oppress them. After a new introduction in ver. 15–18, which praises the deliverance which the Lord has imparted to his people in prospect of death, there follow, in ver. 19–28, the exhortation to open to the people the doors of the sanctuary, in order that they may there give him thanks for his deliverance, a joyful song of triumph for the salvation which has been obtained, and the prayer to the Lord that he would impart his blessing on the important undertaking which gave occasion to the Psalm.

The Psalm falls into two strophes, each of fourteen verses, and a concluding verse, in which the end turns back to the beginning. The fourteen fall both times into an introduction of four verses, and a main-division, divided by the five. The concluding verses of both strophes, fourteen and twenty-eight, depend upon Exod. xv. 2. The word Jehovah occurs twenty-two times, according to the number of the letters of the alphabet; ten times in the first part and twelve times in the second.

That the Psalm has a national reference is put beyond a doubt by ver. 1–4. According to that passage, the singular in ver. 5, and also in the following verses, can refer only to the ideal person of the people. For verse 5th gives the reason why *Israel* ought to praise the Lord. And this reason can be found only in a salvation granted to Israel.

That the deliverance for which the Psalm gives thanks is the deliverance from the Babylonish captivity, there can be no doubt. That the Psalm was composed *immediately* after this deliverance is evident from the tenderness of the thanks, which renders it impossible for us to conceive of the time being that of Nehemiah, as several expositors have done. The destination of the

Psalm for use at some important national *undertaking*, is evident from *O Lord help, O Lord cause us to prosper*, in ver. 25, according to which the destination of the Psalm, assumed by some, without any tenable ground, for general use at the feast of Tabernacles, is altogether excluded. Ver. 22 makes it apparent that this undertaking was the laying of the foundation-stone of the temple in the second year after the return from captivity.

So far we are led on by the Psalm itself. We are brought, however, to a more definite result by the passage, Ezr. iii. 10, 11: "And the builders laid the foundation of the temple of the Lord, and they set the priests in their apparel with the trumpets, and the Levites, the sons of Asaph, with symbols to praise the Lord according to the arrangement[a] of David the king of Israel: and they responded (in so far as each expression of thanks was a response to the good deeds of the Lord) with praise and *thanks to the Lord that he is good, because his mercy is for ever over Israel*, and the whole people shouted with a great shout, praising the Lord because of the laying of the foundation of the house of the Lord." 1. The expression, "with thanks to the Lord," &c., indicates that at the laying of the foundation-stone of the temple a song was sung, the kernel of which consisted of those words which begin and end the Psalm before us. The recollection of this was so fresh that even the author of Chronicles describes with similar words the contents of the songs which were sung at the dedication of the first temple, 2 Chron. v. 13, vii. 3. We are here decidedly directed to the Psalm before us, as the contents of Ps. cvi., cvii., and cxxxvi., prevent us from thinking of them. 2. The expression, "according to the arrangement of David," contains surprising light as soon as we assume that our Psalm, along with the whole dodecade to which it belongs,[b] was sung at the laying of the foundation-stone of the temple. The dodecade is opened by three Psalms of

a The על ידי, where it is used of persons, signifies always "upon the hands of any one," so that his hands, his deeds, thereby form the foundation; *according to the arrangement;* comp. Gesen. in the thesaur., and especially De Dieu in the Crit. Sacr. on Jer. v. 31.

b That it is impossible to isolate our Psalm is evident, for example, from ver. 1-4, compared with cxv. 9-11, the מצר here in ver. 5, and Ps cxvi. 3, used elsewhere only in the single passage, Lam. i. 3, אנא in ver. 25, compared with Ps. cxvi. 16, the דתיתני in ver. 18, compared with the מדדי in Ps. cxvi. 8.

David's; and these give the tone for the rest. 3. The division also of the priests (and Levites) and the people in praising the Lord, is mentioned in precisely a similar way in the book of Ezra, as it is here in ver. 1–4; comp. Ps. cxv. 9–11. 4. The joyful shout of the whole people, and the weeping of those who had seen the first temple, the singular mixture of lamentation and joy, Ezra iii. ver. 12, 13, give the key to the character of the dodecade before us, in which we cannot fail to observe, on the one hand, a sound of melancholy and anguish, and, on the other, a shout of joy over the salvation already wrought out by the Lord.

The common idea that the Psalm was sung by alternate choruses is not confirmed by the narrative in the book of Ezra. That narrative merely assigns the first part in the song to the priests and Levites, while the people fall in. Even the Psalm itself contains nothing that can justify or even favour this view. Luther: "This is my Psalm, the one which I love. Although the whole Psalter, and indeed the whole sacred volume, is dear to me as that which is my only consolation and my life, yet I am particularly pleased with this Psalm, so that it must be called and must be *mine*, for it has often served me well, and has helped me out of many great troubles."

Ver. 1–4.—Ver. 1. *Praise the Lord, for he is good, for his mercy endureth for ever.* Ver. 2. *Let Israel still say: for his mercy endureth for ever.* Ver. 3. *Let the house of Aaron still say: for his mercy endureth for ever.* Ver. 4. *Let those who fear the Lord still say: for his mercy endureth for ever.*—The "praise the Lord, &c.," in ver. 1, is literally from Ps. cvi. 1. The passage there is the original one; the expression is first borrowed in Ps. cvii. 1. It depends on Ps. c. 4, 5, where all the constituent parts are to be found. On the threefold division in ver. 2–4, comp. at Ps. cxv. 9–11.

Ver. 5–14.—Ver. 5. *In the straitness I called upon the Lord, the Lord answered me in a wide place.* Ver. 6. *The Lord is mine, I am not afraid: what can men do to me?* Ver. 7. *The Lord is among those who help me, I shall see my pleasure on those who hate me.* Ver. 8. *It is better to trust in the Lord than to put confidence in men.* Ver. 9. *It is better to trust in the Lord than to put confidence in princes.* Ver. 10. *All the heathen surround me, in the name of the Lord I shall cut them down*

Ver. 11. *They surround me, they surround me, in the name of the Lord I shall cut them down.* Ver. 12. *They surround me like bees, they are extinguished like fire of thorns, in the name of the Lord I shall cut them down.* Ver. 13. *Thou didst push at me that I might fall, but the Lord helped me.* Ver. 14. *My strength and my Psalm is the Lord, and he has been my salvation.*—At the beginning, ver. 5, and at the end, ver. 13 and 14, we have the salvation already *imparted* to the church of the Lord, the deliverance from impending destruction; and in the middle, in seven verses, (which are divided by the four and the three), we have the confident expectation, rising on this ground, of the *completion* of the salvation, of the exaltation from the dust of humilation in which Israel was still lying, and of victory over the heathen world by which they were still surrounded on all sides.—On the second clause of ver. 5, comp. Ps. iv. 1, xviii. 19, xxxi. 8. The במרחב is not "*into* a wide place," but "*in* a wide place." The matter-of-fact answer of the Lord was imparted to the church there. She cried *out of* the narrow place and the straitness, and she obtained the answer in the wide place.[a]—Ver 6 is from Ps. lvi. 4, 11, with this difference, that instead of "I trust in God" there, we have here, "the Lord is to me," from the 9th verse of the same Psalm.—The first clause of ver. 7 is from Ps. liv. 4, comp. on the ב at that passage. On the second clause comp. Ps. liv. 7. In the contest of David with Saul, the church truly beheld an allegory of her contest with the world.—On ver. 8 and 9 comp. Ps. lxii. 8, 9. On חסה at Ps. ii. 12. The *princes* are the possessors of the power of the world (comp. Ps. cxlvi. 3), on whom the heathen placed their trust, and to whom Israel stood in opposition. If we realize the condition of Israel at the time immediately after the return from captivity, the small, poor, disorganised, little mass, in view of a whole hostile world, we shall find in the clause before us an expression of real heroic faith, well fitted to put us to shame.—We must not change "*all* the heathens," in ver. 10, into "heathens *of all kinds*." The

a Luther: Let him learn here who can, and every one shall become even a falcon who may mount on high in such trouble. It is said: I called upon the Lord. Thou must learn to call and not to sit there by thyself, and lie on the bench, hang and shake the head, and bite and devour thyself with thy thoughts, but come on, thou indolent knave, down upon thy knees, up with thy hands and eyes to heaven, take a Psalm or a prayer, and set forth thy distress with tears before God."

whole *surrounding* power of the world was hostile to Israel.[a] In these parts fear and faith beheld the *whole*. *In the name of the Lord*,—through his power which has been rendered glorious by the illustration of his deeds, comp. at Ps. xxxiii. 21, lii. 9, liv. 1. The כִּי is to be taken in the sense of "that:"—*it is that I shall cut them down*,—an emphatic expression, instead of *I shall cut them down;* comp. Is. vii. 7, and Drechler on the passage. The warlike cry, "I shall cut them down," is an echo to Ps. cx. It was only in connection with an entirely new state of things, such as that which was to be introduced by the Messiah, that such hopes, thoroughly foolish in a human point of view, could be realized. The מוּל, with the single exception of Ps. xc. 6, where the Pil. occurs in the sense of *to cut*, has always the sense of *to circumcise;* and this sense is assuredly to be retained here. Victory over the heathen, the "uncircumcised," appears under the image of a forced circumcision; comp. similar allusions to circumcision in Gal. v. 12; Phil. iii. 2; Ps. lviii. 7; Is. i. 22; perhaps with reference to the practical irony in 1 Sam. xviii. 25, 2 Sam. iii. 14.—In reference to the relation of the סבוני and the סבבוני in ver. 11, comp. at Ps. xviii. 5.—"As bees," in ver. 12, is from Deut. i. 44. "They are extinguished" (Luther falsely: they smoke), is a pret. of *faith*. *Fire of thorns*,—which quickly blazes up, but is soon extinguished.—In ver. 13, where the Psalmist returns to the facts of the past, which afford security for what is to take place in the future, the address is directed to the *enemy*.—Ver. 14 is, like Is. xii. 2, taken from the song of Moses, the servant of God, Ex. xv. 2, the first of the church's songs of thanksgiving, and which forms the foundation for all the later songs till the end of time; comp. Rev. xv. 3. That the Psalmist drew from the *fountain*, and not from Is. xii. 2, is clear from the circumstance, that the concluding verse of the second main division depends upon the second half of Ex. xv. 2. The first half of the verse before us denotes the constantly abiding relation (my strength and my song, the *object* of the same, *i. e.*, my mighty and glorious helper), the second the

[a] Luther most significantly points to the real ground of this hostility: "Men can put up with all other doctrines and all other gods, so that no nation and no country will set itself in hostility; but when the word of God comes, then the whole world is up, then tumults and animosities rise on all sides."

consequence which proceeded from that relation. As there is not one single well ascertained instance of the suffix having to be supplied from the preceding clauses (the instances adduced by Ewald, § 329, are not tenable), we must have recourse to the supposition, that the Jod of the suffix in זמרת is rejected on account of the יה which follows, after the Syrian fashion, according to which the Jod is merely written, not pronounced.

Ver. 15–18.—Ver. 15. *The voice of rejoicing and salvation (resounds) in the tabernacles of the righteous: the right hand of the Lord doeth valiantly.* Ver. 16. *The right hand of the Lord exalts, the right hand of the Lord doeth valiantly.* Ver. 17. *I shall not die, but live and make known the works of the Lord.* Ver. 18. *The Lord afflicted me sorely, but he did not give me over to death.*—*The voice of salvation* in ver. 15 is the voice which praises the salvation, that already wrought out and that still hoped for. *Tabernacles* is repeatedly used as a poetic term for habitations generally, Ps. lxxviii. 55, xci. 10. In all probability a part of the people at that time, the second year after the return, still dwelt in tents; at all events the chief habitation of Israel still consisted of a tent. On צדיקים, *righteous*, as a name of the Israelites, comp. at Ps. xxxiii. 1. "Does valiantly" alludes to Ps. cviii. 12, comp. Ps. lx. 12.—The רממה, ver. 16, is not the partic. of רמם, but the Pil. of רום *to exalt;* Ps. xxxvii. 34, in accordance with "it does valiantly," according to which we are led to expect here a description of what the Lord's right hand does, not of what it is.—"I shall not die," in ver. 17, shews that, as far as could be seen, the thought of death to the church was very near; comp. Ps. lxxi. 20, Hab. i. 12, Ps. cxvi. 15. She conquers this thought, however, while looking at the deliverance from death which she had just experienced; I shall not die, because he has not left me to die. The *works of the Lord* are the glorious deeds by which he shall protect and deliver his people.

Ver. 19–28.—Ver. 19. *Open unto me the gates of righteousness, I will go in and praise the Lord.* Ver. 20. *This is the gate of the Lord, the righteous enter in by it.* Ver. 21. *I praise thee that thou didst hear me and hast been my salvation.* Ver. 22. *The stone which the builders rejected has become the corner stone.* Ver. 23. *This has happened from the Lord, it is*

wonderful in our eyes. Ver. 24. *This is the day which the Lord hath made, let us rejoice and be glad in it.* Ver. 25. *O Lord, help now, O Lord, cause us to prosper.* Ver. 26. *Blessed be he who cometh, in the name of the Lord, we bless you from the house of the Lord.* Ver. 27. *The Lord is God, and he hath enlightened us, bind the sacrifice with cords unto the horns of the altars.* Ver. 28. *Thou art my God, and I will praise thee, my God, I will exalt thee.*—The *gates*, in ver. 19, are the gates of the provisional sanctuary. Almost immediately after the return from captivity, the site of the old sanctuary was undoubtedly enclosed, and as had been the case on a former occasion in the days of David, a tabernacle was erected previous to the commencement of the celebration of public worship, Ezr. iii. 1, ss. The gates of the sanctuary are called the gates of *righteousness*, because the fountain of righteousness, *i. e.*, of matter-of-fact justification, or of salvation, for Israel was there, comp. ver. 26.—The *righteous go in by it*, ver. 20, for the purpose, namely, announced in ver. 19, of praising and giving thanks. The Lord, by his righteousness, by their matter-of-fact justification, pledges himself that he will give them, as Israel had already experienced that he had done, opportunity to praise him in the sanctuary.—The second clause of ver. 21 alludes again to Ex. xv. 2, comp. at ver. 14.—The figure in ver. 22 becomes clear, as soon as we acknowledge the national reference of the Psalm, and ascertain correctly the occasion for which it was written. The whole Psalm is taken up with the happy change which had taken place in the circumstances of the people of God. It is this that is treated of in the three verses immediately preceding. The sense therefore can only be: the people of God whom earthly potentates have despised, have been exalted by the influence of their God to the rank of a people that shall reign over the world. Jer. li. 26 is parallel when it is said of Babylon, the exact *counterpart* of Israel, the representative of the power of the world: "they shall not take of thee a stone for a corner, nor a stone for a foundation," for the building of the edifice of universal dominion. What happened in the type to Israel happened in the antitype to Christ, comp. Matth. xxi. 42, Acts iv. 11, passages which led the older expositors to apply directly the whole Psalm to Christ—an application, the untenable nature of which is clear as day. The ex-

pression "has become" belongs to the view taken by *faith*, which in this weak beginning, the deliverance of Israel from captivity, sees the glorious end, dominion over the world, just as the external *corner stone*, the sight of which suggested the figure, was at the time a corner stone only in idea: there elapsed many a long year, and the work went on through many painful hindrances before the temple was ended, and the corner stone became such in reality. Perhaps at bottom there is an allusion to a contest which had taken place between the builders of the temple (comp. Esr. iii. 10, "And the builders laid the foundation of the temple,") and the priests in reference to the choice of the corner stone, and in which the theological principles of the latter had gained the victory over the worldly views of the former. ראש הפנה, *the (spiritual) head of the corner, the main stone of the corner*, is always the stone usually termed by us the *corner stone* (comp. Job xxxviii. 6), which is also in other passages used as a figure of royalty, comp. the Christol. at Zech. x. 4. The scriptures know nothing of a top stone. Zech. x. 4 is to be translated "Who art thou, O great mountain, before Zerubabel? Become a plain! And *he has brought out* (at the laying the foundation stone of the temple, as the following context shews), the main-stone under the repeated shouting (of angels): grace, grace, to it!"—The lifting up of the church from the dust of humiliation to dominion over all the nations of the world, ver. 23, is infinitely more wonderful than any wonders usually so called, which occupy the foreground only for the *blind*.—*The Lord has made the day*, ver. 24, in which by his salvation he has given occasion to this festive meeting, has brought about the possibility of laying the foundation-stone of the temple.—It is evident from Neh. i. 11, that we have before us in ver. 25 the *formula* made use of in imploring the divine blessing on important undertakings. In later times this *formula* was undoubtedly made use of at the Feast of Tabernacles. But no inference can be drawn from this later use as to the origin of the expression.—In ver. 26 the connection usually adopted is, "blessed is he who cometh in the name of the Lord," *i.e.*, under the protecting care of him who has rendered himself glorious by his deeds. But that the connection ought rather to be "blessed in the name of the Lord is he who cometh" is evident, besides the accents (comp. on these Dachsel in his

Bibl. accent.), from the corresponding expression "from the house of the Lord," "the house of righteousness," ver. 19, the fountain and the treasury of all blessing, but above all from the phrase, "to bless in the name of the Lord"—the name of the Lord, his historically manifested glory, the *fountain* of blessing—a phrase which is one of constant occurrence, comp. Deut. xxi. 5, Num. v. 27, 2 Sam. vi. 18, Ps. cxxix. 8. The expression "who cometh,"[a] needs no epithet or additional clause. It refers to ver. 19 and 20, where the discourse had been simply of coming. There is not the least necessity in the verse before us to apply it to a separate chorus of priests. The priests and the Levites had the *first part* in all the singing; and such formulæ of blessing were then uttered also by the people, comp. Ps. cxxix. 8, Ruth ii. 4; the Israelites were far less high-church than is generally imagined.—The sense of the 27th verse is this: "Jehovah is God in the full sense of the word, and he has really shewn this by bestowing salvation upon us his people, let us therefore do our part and shew our gratitude to him by our offerings." The relation of the two clauses to each other is precisely the same as that of "thou art my God," and "I will praise thee (therefore I will)" in ver. 28. The expression "he shone," or "he enlightened us," does not allude to the Mosaic blessing, Num. vi. 25—in this case the "countenance" would not be wanting—but to Ex. xiii. 21: "and the Lord went before them in a pillar of cloud to guide them in the way, and by night in a pillar of fire to shine or to shine upon them," (להאיר להם comp. xiv. 20, Neh. ix. 12). The expression therefore is equivalent to "he hath shone upon us during the night of our misery, as he did formerly during the natural night in the march through the wilderness. In the second clause the "feast" stands instead of the "feast-offering." The חג is used in this way of the sacrifices of feast in Ex. xxiii. 18, "to eat the feast," מועד, is used instead of "the flesh of the feast-offering." In Deut. xvi. 2, the "passover" denotes the "sacrifice of the passover;" and in the New Testament, "to eat the passover," is used of the eating not merely of the paschal lamb, but also of the other paschal offerings, Jo. xviii. 28. "To the horns of the altar," is "till they be sacrified." The horns

[a] The designation of the Messiah ὁ ἐρχόμενος was not taken from the passage before us, but from Mal. iii. 1, compare the Christol. 3 p. 468.

of the altar are named because they were sprinkled with the blood of the sacrifices.. Luther's translation, "adorn the feast with green boughs even to the horns of the altar," has found defenders even in recent times. But it must be rejected for the following reasons. 1. The עבתים never signifies "cords." This sense has been altogether incorrectly assumed in Ez. xix. 11, xxxi. 3, 10, 14, comp. against this view the Christol. 3, p. 305, and Hävernick on his commentary. 2. The whole phrase אסר ביעבתים occurs in Jud. xv. 13, xvi. 11. Ez. iii. 25, in the sense of "to bind with cords." 3. The horns of the altar, in which the altar as it were culminated, as the horn of the beast is strength and ornament, are constantly mentioned in connection with the blood of the victims sprinkled upon them. 4. The "I will praise and I will exalt," in ver. 28, stands in the same relation to "bind, &c." exactly as in Ps. cxvi. 17, "I will call upon the name of the Lord," does to "I will bring to thee offerings of praise." "I will pay my vows to the Lord," Ps. cxvi. 18 is exactly parallel to the second clause.—Ver. 28 is from Ex. xv. 2, comp. at ver. 14.

Ver. 29. *Praise the Lord, because he is good, for his mercy endureth for ever.*—Luther: "Thus it is that we are wont to begin again good songs after we have sung them through, especially if we have sung them with pleasure and love."

Our Psalm concludes what is usually called the Great Hallel, which consists of Ps. cxiii.–cxviii., and which was sung at all the feasts, especially at the Passover and the feast of Tabernacles;—a practice which appears to have been followed by our Lord with his disciples, Matth. xxvi. 30, and which testifies to the deep impression which the Psalm must have made on the people at the time when it was originally composed. This practice is deserving of our notice in so far as it must have been based upon a perception of the connection subsisting among these Psalms.

PSALM CXIX.

The chief song of the feast, the proper dedication song, followed the decade which served as it were as an Introduction to it. A children's sermon forms the conclusion of the dodecade, (comp.

ver. 9), an instruction with which the people were dismissed, as they entered upon this new period of their history. Every misfortune, under which they were in part still sighing, had proceeded from their departure from the word of God; faithfulness, therefore, towards the word of God, in deed and in hope, is exhibited as the royal road to salvation.

According to the remark of the Massorites, ver. 122 is the only one in which no mention whatever is made of any one of the names of the word of God. The praise of this word, the assertion that it is the infinitely sure way of salvation, and the only comfort in suffering, the determination to be faithful to God's word and law, prayer for the spiritual understanding of the law, and for strength to fulfil it, and supplications for the salvation promised in it, form the contents of this Psalm.

That the Psalm consists of a collection of individual sayings, and that there is no room for attempting to discover any connection, or to trace any consecutive train of thought, is evident *a priori* from the formal arrangement. This is strictly alphabetical throughout; so much so, that to each of the twenty-two letters of the alphabet there are assigned eight verses, each of which begins with the same letter. In accordance with this division into twenty-two parts, the name Jehovah occurs twenty-two times,—exactly the same number as in the preceding Psalm. The Psalm, according to this its arrangement, is not intended to be read straight forward; if this be done, its want of connection will scarcely fail to be *irksome*, even to those whose heart is in its right place in regard to the word of God, as praised by the Psalmist; it ought to be used something in the same way in which we use the portions and the doctrinal texts from the Moravian Brethren.

The national reference of the Psalm (comp. at Ps. cxii. 2), appears from ver. 23, 46, 161, according to which the *princes* take counsel against the Psalmist and persecute him, and he is resolved to speak before *kings* of the testimonies of God; from ver. 87th, where he complains that he is nearly destroyed out of the land, comp. Ps. cxv. 14; from ver. 44th, where he promises that he will always and eternally observe the law of God. The manifold references, also, which it contains to the great national deliverances of ancient times, for example ver. 52, lead us to look

upon it as bearing a national character. If we regard the national import of the Psalm as fixed, we must also consider large portions of it which appear, at first sight, to be declarative, viz., the oft-repeated affirmations about zeal in following the law, to bear in reality a hortatory character.

The situation is entirely the same as that in the eight preceding Psalms. The beginning of deliverance is already present, ver. 26, 32, 50, 65, 93; still it is only *the beginning:* the Psalmist always finds himself still in death; comp., for example, vers. 17, 25, 40. The church of God is still few in number, ver. 87, it is still severely oppressed by "the proud," the haughty heathen world, for example, ver. 50, and the reproach which lies upon it is dreadful, ver. 39. The tone of the Psalm, like the situation, is common to it with the eight preceding Psalms. It is that of soft quiet melancholy comforted by God.

The Psalm may be recognised, by its compass, as being the conclusion of one great whole. It not only possesses the alphabetical arrangement in common with the Introduction of the Collection, Ps. cxi. cxii., but it is also nearly related to it in thought. In that Introduction, also, praise is bestowed upon the salvation of those who observe the commandments of God. There are, besides, several points of contact, in individual expressions, with Ps. cxi.–cxviii.

A characteristic feature of our Psalm is the deep conviction that we have nothing to do with human strength in keeping the commandments of God, but that God alone must create the will and the power to perform. The church of God had been convinced of this from the beginning; comp. for example, Ps. xc., xix., li. And the circumstances of the people explain the fact that such efforts are made to bring it prominently forward in this Psalm. A sense of need of *external* deliverance is accompanied, in the case of the well-disposed, by a sense of need of *internal* salvation; the one goes hand in hand with the other: the cross is the best teacher of humility.

Ver. 1–8.—Ver. 1. *Blessed are they who live blamelessly, who walk in the law of the Lord.* Ver. 2. *Blessed are they who keep his testimonies, who seek him with the whole heart.* Ver. 3. *Who also do no unrighteousness, walk in his ways.* Ver. 4. *Thou hast appointed thy commandments, that we may*

keep them carefully. Ver. 5. *Oh that my ways were confirmed to observe thy commandments.* Ver. 6. *Then shall I not be ashamed when I regard all thine ordinances.* Ver. 7. *I will praise thee in uprightness of heart, when I learn the laws of thy righteousness.* Ver. 8. *Thy commandments I will keep; forsake me not too much.*—In reference to "confirmed," in ver. 5, comp. at Ps. li. 10, lxxviii. 37.—"To be ashamed," in ver. 6, is to be disappointed in the hope of salvation.—In ver. 7, the sense is: I will praise thee not superficially, or like the hypocrites, but from the bottom of my heart, when I learn by *thy grace* thy law, comp. "*teach* me thy commandments," in ver. 12, 26.—Before the second clause of ver. 8 we are to suppose a "therefore" put in. The prayer is that of one who finds himself in a very desolate condition. In the case of the man who faithfully follows the commandments of God such a condition cannot be a *permanent* one.

Ver. 9-16.—Ver. 9. *By what shall a young man keep clean his way? By conducting himself according to thy word.* Ver. 10. *With my whole heart I seek thee, let me not wander from thy ordinances.* Ver. 11. *In my heart I keep thy word, in order that I may not sin against thee.* Ver. 12. *Blessed be thou, O Lord, teach me thy commandments.* Ver. 13. *With my lips I recount all the judgments of thy mouth.* Ver. 14. *I rejoice in the way of thy testimonies more than in all riches.* Ver. 15. *I will meditate upon thy commandments and look to thy ways.* Ver. 16. *I delight in thy commandments; forget not thy word.*—The *purifying* in ver. 9 stands opposed to the *pollution* of sin, which covers those young men who give themselves up to their lusts. At the שׁמר we must supply "way," *when he takes heed to it;* or it stands absolutely in the sense of "to take heed to himself."—On ver. 11. Amyr.: "For this is the only antidote by which we can protect ourselves against the corruption of our nature."—The antecedent doxology in ver. 12 contains the basis of the following prayer: O Lord, thou who art so abundant in power and in grace towards thine own.—On ver. 13 comp. Deut. vi. 7. Where the word of God is really in the *heart* it will also be found on the *lips*.—The *way of thy testimonies*, in ver. 14, is, according to ver. 27, the manner of life prescribed by the commandments of God.—*Thy paths*, ver. 15, those prescribed by thee and well pleasing to thee.

Ver. 17-24.—Ver. 17. *Give life to thy servant, so will I keep thy words.* Ver. 18. *Open my eyes that I may see the wonders in thy law.* Ver. 19. *I am a stranger on the earth, hide not from me thy commandments.* Ver. 20. *My soul is broken from longing after thy judgments at all times.* Ver. 21. *Thou hast rebuked the proud, the accursed ones, who wander from thy ordinances.* Ver. 22. *Turn away from me reproach and contempt, because I keep thy testimonies.* Ver. 23. *Princes also sit; they speak against me; thy servant meditateth upon thy commandments.* Ver. 24. *Thy testimonies are ever my delight, my counsellors.*—As the גמול, ver. 17, only signifies "to give as a gift," (comp. at Ps. vii. 4) the אֶחְיֶה must be the thing given, and must stand as a noun: *I may live* = *life.* It is the preservation of the national existence of the people that is meant, comp. ver. 25, 77.—"The wonders *out* of thy law," ver. 18, are those proceeding out of it for the enlightened eye, those which it perceives in it. Even the simple practical truths of the law are *wonders*; and it is on these assuredly that the Psalmist, in the first instance, thinks, according to the whole simply practical import of the Psalm. Even these lie beyond the sphere of natural intellect, which cannot be considered as their birth-place, for example, "Thou shalt love the Lord with all thy heart, with all thy soul, and with all thy strength, and thy neighbour as thyself."—On ver. 19 Luther is short and good: "I have no inheritance except thy word, therefore forsake me not." *Pilgrimage* is a figurative term, denoting helplessness and misery, comp., for example, Ps. xxxix. 12. The following of the commandment is for Israel, in those circumstances, the only means of deliverance.—That, in ver. 20, מִשְׁפָּטִים is not *judgments* in the sense of the commandments of God, but his *righteous deeds* (comp. ver. 39, and especially ver. 52), is evident from the connection with what follows. Even the being *broken*, which leads to the idea of a very painful desire after a distant good, does not suit the commandments.—Ver. 21 refers to the judgments of God in ancient times upon the proud heathen world, for example upon Pharaoh; comp. Ps. ix. 5. Under "Thou didst rebuke," there lies concealed a "rebuke them now," comp. ver. 22. The *accursed*—whoever does not obey the law of God stands under the curse, comp. Deut. xxvii. 26, Gal. iii. 10.—That the גַּל in ver. 22 is the imperat. of

גלל, *to roll away*, is obvious from the literal allusion to Jos. v. 9: as was once the reproach of Egypt.—Thy servant meditates upon thy commandments, ver. 23, and has in that love to them to which salvation is promised a firm shield against all the assaults of the whole world. The *princes* are the chieftains of the neighbouring nations who published abroad every thing to injure Israel.—The "even," in ver. 24, is appended to "meditates." *They are my counsellors*,—they stand to me in the place of counsellors, I am better advised by them than if I had the best counsellors and allies,—in opposition to the deliberations of the princes in ver. 23.

Ver. 25–32.—Ver. 25. *My soul cleaveth to the dust; quicken me according to thy word.* Ver. 26. *I have detailed my ways, and thou didst hear me.* Ver. 27. *Teach me the way of thy commandments, and I will meditate upon thy wonders.* Ver. 28. *My soul weeps for grief; raise me up according to thy word.* Ver. 29. *The way of lies remove far from me, and grant me graciously thy law.* Ver. 30. *The way of faithfulness I have chosen; thy judgments I lay before me.* Ver. 31. *I adhere to thy testimonies, O Lord, let me not be put to shame.* Ver. 32. *The way of thy commandments I will run, for thou enlargest my heart.*—The first clause of ver. 25 is from Ps. xliv. 25.—The sense of ver. 26 is, as is manifest on comparing ver. 32: I brought my trouble to thee, and thou didst hear me (comp. Ps. cxviii. 5: "Out of my distress I cried unto the Lord, the Lord answered me in a wide place," ver. 21), teach me now thy commandments, in order that, by my obedience, I may shew my gratitude. The *ways* are the concerns, the case.—The *prayer* and the *promise*, in ver. 27, depend upon the common ground of the most profound reverence for the divine law and of the desire hence arising to penetrate into its depths. The way of the commandments of God is the manner of life prescribed by them. On "thy wonders" comp. ver. 18.—*For grief*, ver. 28, on account of the many sufferings to which I am exposed in spite of my sincere adherence to thy law. *According to thy word*,—the promise which thou hast given to thy own people.—*The way of lies*, in ver. 29, is, as is evident from its opposite, *the way of faithfulness*, the way of faithless apostacy and covenant-breaking. For the people of the Lord, who have vowed faithfulness to him,

every act of apostacy is a lie. The opposite is expressed in the second clause: "and give me thy law." The חנן with a double accusative is: to favour any one with anything, to give him anything.—The אמונה, ver. 30, is always *faithfulness*, never *truth*. *Thy judgments I have laid down*,—as the mark and rule of all my actions.—The sense of ver. 32 is; thankful for thy deliverance, I will be careful to follow thy commandments; comp., as really parallel, ver. 26. *Thou enlargest my heart* is, "Thou makest me glad by thy salvation," (comp. Ps. cxviii. 5, and ver. 45 here), in opposition to the former straitness and trouble, Ps. cxvi. 3.

Ver. 33–40.—Ver. 33. *Teach me, O Lord, the way of thy commandments, and I shall keep them even to the end.* Ver. 34. *Instruct me and I shall keep thy law, and observe it with my whole heart.* Ver. 35. *Guide me in the path of thy precepts, for I delight in it.* Ver. 36. *Incline my heart to thy testimonies and not to gain.* Ver. 37. *Turn thou away my eyes that I may not see deceit, quicken me in thy way.* Ver. 38. *Fulfil to thy servant thy word which is to thy fear.* Ver. 39. *Turn away my reproach which I fear, for thy judgments are good.* Ver. 40. *Behold I long after thy commandments; through thy righteousness quicken me.*—In ver. 33 and 34, the relation of the *prayers* and the *resolutions* is the same as in ver. 27. The עקב stands adverbally as in ver. 112.—Ver. 36: *and mayest thou not incline it*,—as thou dost to the *ungodly*, whom thou givest over to the power of their passions as a punishment for sinful indulgence (comp. Rom. i. 24),—*to gain*.—*Deceit*, ver. 37, is all that in which salvation is sought apart from God, idols, human power, &c.; comp. Ps. lx. 11, xxxi. 6, xl. 4, lxii. 9. May all this make as little impression upon the Psalmist as if he saw it not. He is determined to obtain salvation only *in the ways of God*, by faithfulness to his commandment. *Quicken me*, out of the death of misery to which I am still given over; comp. ver. 17, 25, 40, 50, Ps. cxvi. 3.—*Which is to thy fear, i. e.*, which is to those who fear thee; comp. Gen. xviii. 19; 1 Kings ii. 4, viii. 25.—The *reproach* is the object of the *fear*, ver. 39, in so far as, by its greatness, it filled the Psalmist with the apprehension that he would come to a bad end; comp. Job ix. 28. *For thy judgments are good*, not evil, and the time must therefore be at hand when they shall be turned away from thy church and

turned upon the world.—"Therefore" is to be understood before the second clause of ver. 40. The desire after the commandments of God is the distinguishing mark of the righteous, and the pledge of salvation.

Ver. 41–48.—Ver. 41. *May thy tender mercies come to me, O Lord, thy salvation according to thy word.* Ver. 42. *Give me an answer for those who reproach me, for I trust in thy word.* Ver. 43. *And take not true discourse altogether away from my mouth, for I wait on thy judgments.* Ver. 44. *And I will observe thy law continually, always and eternally.* Ver. 45. *And I shall walk in a wide space, for I seek thy commandments.* Ver. 46. *And I will speak of thy testimonies before kings, and not be ashamed.* Ver. 47. *And I delight in thy commandments which I love.* Ver. 48. *And I lift up my hands to thy precepts which I love; and I meditate upon thy law.*—God gives an answer for those who reproach by *his gift of salvation;* for the want of salvation is the object of the reproach.—*True discourse*, ver. 43, a well-grounded answer to the reproaching foes. God takes this away when he does not permit his salvation to fail to appear.—The *lifting up of the hands*, ver. 48, symbolizes the lifting up of the heart; comp. at Ps. xxviii. 2.

Ver. 49–56.—Ver 49. *Remember to thy servant thy word, because thou hast caused me to hope.* Ver. 50. *This is my consolation in my misery, that thy word hath quickened me.* Ver. 51. *The proud hold me greatly in derision, I turn not aside from thy law.* Ver. 52. *I remember thy judgments from eternity, O Lord, and shall be comforted.* Ver. 53. *Wrath seizes me because of the wicked who forsake thy law.* Ver. 54. *Thy laws are my song in the house of my pilgrimage.* Ver. 55. *I remember thy name during the night, O Lord, and observe thy law.* Ver. 56. *This I have, that I observe thy precepts.* The זכר דבר, in ver. 49, is exactly the same as our phrase *to keep one's word.* The על אשר, in the sense of "because," occurs in Deut. xxix. 24, 2 Sam. iii. 30. The translation, "on which thou hast caused me to hope," has long since been set aside by the remark that, in this case, the words would have been אשר עליך.—In ver. 50, the *quickening* is, as always in our Psalm, to be understood of external restoration. And as, according to other passages, the beginning of the quickening and

of the salvation was already *present*, ver. 93, 26, 32, 65, there is no reason for translating "he shall quicken," instead of "has quickened." What the word *has already done*, is to faith a pledge of what it *shall yet do*.—The object of the contempt of the proud, ver. 51, that is, of the haughty heathen world surrounding Israel, is the contrast between the reality and the idea, the apparently utterly visionary and foolish expectation of the judgment and of the gracious interposition, with which the souls of the Israelites were filled; comp. ver. 42. The Israelites, however, did not permit themselves to be driven away by this reproach, however well-grounded to natural reason it might appear to be, from their faith and their God; they were not seduced to turn aside from his law.—Israel takes refuge in the past from the present, ver. 52. The glorious *judgments* of God during the entire long course of history, which are just as many *gracious interpositions*, afford him a pledge that his God, at his own time, will again come out of his concealment, and that the proper relation of the kingdom of God to the world shall be restored. On זַלְעָפָה, *violent anger*, in ver. 53, comp. at Ps. xi. 6.—*Thy commandments*, ver. 54, with the promises annexed in them to obedience, *are my song*, the object of joyful praise, such as is found in the Psalm before us, *in the house of my pilgrimage*, the house where I as a pilgrim dwell, *i. e.*, in the condition of helplessness and misery in which I at present find myself; comp. on the figure of pilgrimage Ps. xxxix. 12.—*I remember during the night*, ver. 55, to which the pain is nearly allied, and in which it is felt in all its elements, and reachest its greatest height, *thy name*, thy glorious deeds in the past, ver. 52, and *observe thy law*, full of hope that thy name shall again flourish.—*This is to me*, ver. 56, this I have, and in it the hope of salvation; comp. Deut. vi. 25.

Ver. 57, 64.—Ver. 57. *The Lord is my potion, I say that I will keep thy words.* Ver. 58. *I entreat thee with my whole heart: be gracious to me according to thy word.* Ver. 59. *I considered my ways, and turned my feet to thy testimonies.* Ver. 60. *I make haste and delay not to keep thy precepts.* Ver. 61. *The snares of the wicked surround me, I forget not thy law.* Ver. 62. *At midnight I rise to praise thee because of the judgments of thy righteousness.* Ver. 63. *I am a com-*

panion to those who feared thee and kept thy commandments. Ver. 64. *The earth is full of thy mercy, O Lord, teach me thy commandments.*—That we must translate, in ver. 57, "the Lord is my portion," or even "O Lord my portion," (not: I say, O Lord, this shall be my portion that I keep thy commandments), is evident, besides the accents (comp. Dachsel in the Bibl. accent.), from Ps. xvi. 5, lxxiii. 26; it is also evident, from comparing these passages, that the sense is: the Lord is my helper and the author of my salvation. This conviction forms an important reason for resolving to keep the commandments of God. On חלה פנים, *to supplicate*, ver. 58, comp. at Ps. xlv. 12.—On ver. 59 comp. ver. 26, 67. The punishment of the captivity led the people to repentance.—*At midnight*, ver. 62, when the Lord went out among the Egyptians, Ex. xi. 4, xii. 29, to which passages also Job xxxiv. 20 alludes. The מיושבים is not as in ver. 7, but as in ver. 20, 52.—*A companion*, ver. 63, a sharer with them in their efforts, comp. Ps. xvi. 3. *All who feared thee*, viz., the pious men who lived in past ages, Mal. iii. 4. At ver. 64, comp. ver. 12, &c. Do thou of whose mercy the earth is full, shew mercy to me, &c.

Ver. 65–72.—Ver. 65. *Thou dost good to thy servant, O Lord, according to thy word.* Ver. 66. *Teach me good understanding and insight, for I believe in thy commandments.* Ver. 67. *Before I was afflicted I went astray, but now I keep thy word.* Ver. 68, 69. *The proud devise lies against me, I observe with my whole heart thy commandments.* Ver. 70. *Their heart is coarse as fat, I delight in thy law.* Ver. 71. *It is good for me that I have been humbled, so that I may learn thy commandments.* Ver. 72. *The law of thy mouth is better to me than thousands of gold and silver.*—The *good done* in ver. 65, is the deliverance from captivity, comp. ver. 26, 32, 50.—On טוב, *good*, comp. at Ps. xxvii. 13, xxxi. 19. We are to suppose added at "teach me:" by disclosing to me thy law, and writing it on my heart; comp. ver. 12, 64, 68, where the corresponding expression is: teach me thy commandments.—Ver. 67 refers to the revolution which had taken place in the minds of the people, in consequence of the captivity, compare ver. 71, 75, and at the עניתי, Ps. cxvi. 10. The אמירה was used of the

commandments at ver. 11.—On ver. 68 comp. ver. 12, 64.—*Lies*, ver. 69, such as the charges of sedition mentioned in Esr. iv. The keeping of the commandments of God, is introduced as the protection against the injurious consequences of slander. *More than fat*, ver. 70, as a description of spiritual insensibility, hardness, and stupidity, compare at Ps. xvii. 10, lxxiii. 7. On the second clause comp. ver. 16, 47.

Ver. 73–80.—Ver. 73. *Thy hands have made me and fashioned me, teach me, so that I learn thy commandments.* Ver. 74. *Those who fear shall see and rejoice, for I wait upon thy word.* Ver. 75. *I know, O Lord, that thy judgments are right, and that in faithfulness thou hast afflicted me.* Ver. 76. *Let thy mercy comfort me, according to thy word to thy servant.* Ver. 77. *Let thy compassion come to me, so that I may live, for thy law is my joy.* Ver. 78. *May the proud be ashamed, for with lies they mortify me, I meditate upon thy commandments.* Ver. 79. *Those who fear thee shall return to me, and those who know thy testimonies.* Ver. 80. *May my heart be blameless in thy commandments, that I may not be ashamed.*—On ver. 73 compare the fundamental passage, Deut. xxxii. 6. Israel is indebted to God for his whole external and internal existence, as it were for his body and soul.—The sense of ver. 74, is, as appears from comparing the parallel passages, Ps. v. 11, xxxiv. 2, lii. 6, "may those who fear thee obtain occasion for joy by my prosperous fortune." *For I wait upon thy word*, and therefore cannot be put to shame.—Ver. 75 alludes to Deut. xxxii. 4 (comp. ver. 73), where God is designated as *faithful* even in reference to the sufferings of his people. Hence אֱמוּנָה is the *nomin.* "as faithfulness," that is, without in the smallest degree violating faithfulness. The knowledge which the church here expresses depends upon conviction of sin. The divine government in reference to Israel's sufferings is in Deut. xxxii. based upon Israel's sinfulness.—On ver. 77 comp. ver. 17.—At ver. 78 we are to suppose added: and cannot therefore be put to shame, have therein the assurance of salvation, comp. ver. 80.—*Those who fear thee shall return to me*, ver. 79, like the friends of Job, who had been perplexed at him, and returned to him when God restored him. The offence which the fate of the church had caused to the fear of God shall disap-

pear on the return of the church's salvation.—*In thy commandments*, ver. 80, in reference to them. *So that I may not be ashamed*, disappointed in my hope of salvation.

Ver. 81–88.—Ver. 81. *My soul thirsteth for thy word, I wait for thy salvation.* Ver. 82. *Mine eyes long after thy word, and I say: when wilt thou comfort me.* Ver. 83. *For I am like a bottle in the smoke, I forget not thy commandments.* Ver. 84. *How many are the days of thy servant? when wilt thou execute judgment upon my persecutors?* Ver. 85. *The proud have dug pits for me, who are not according to thy law.* Ver. 86. *All thy commandments are faithfulness, with lies they persecute me, help me.* Ver. 87. *They have almost destroyed me in the land, and I forsake not thy precepts.* Ver. 88. *According to thy mercy quicken me, I will keep the testimony of thy mouth.*—*After thy word*, ver. 82, after the fulfilment of thy promise. What the smoke is for the bottle, which is hung in the smoke, an unsuitable position for it, and is thereby destroyed and rendered useless, that suffering is for the church. Being completely exhausted by it, she may well hope that the Lord will soon have mercy upon her, when the condition of salvation, zeal in obeying the law, exists in her, and has not been removed, but has been induced by her sufferings.—In ver. 84 the prayer for judgment upon the enemies, is grounded upon the brevity of the space that is left for the divine recompence, comp. Ps. xxxix. 13. How narrow are the boundaries by which the existence of an individual or of a generation is shut up!—In ver. 86, the commandments come into notice in reference to those promises appended to them, which never deceive.—*They have almost destroyed me in the land*, ver. 87, as Israel, of whom only a very small remnant now is left, formerly destroyed the Canaanites, 2 Chron. viii. 8. The translation, "to the ground," arose merely from not observing the national reference. The בָּאָרֶץ is just as in ver. 19.

Ver. 89–96.—Ver. 89. *Eternal art thou, O Lord, thy word stands in heaven.* Ver. 90. *From generation to generation thy faithfulness endures, thou didst establish the earth and it stood.* Ver. 91. *For thy judgments they still stand to-day, for every thing must serve thee.* Ver. 92. *If thy law were not my joy I would have perished in my affliction.* Ver. 93. *I shall not forget thy commandments for ever, for by them thou didst quicken*

me. Ver. 94. *I am thine, help me, for I seek thy commandments.* Ver. 95. *The wicked wait upon me to annihilate me, I observe thy testimonies.* Ver. 96. *I see an end of all perfection, thy commandment is exceedingly broad.*—*Thy word stands*, as it were *in heaven*, ver. 89, is equally eternal with it, which was erected by thee, and received an eternal existence, comp. Ps. lxxxix. 2. —*And it stood*, ver. 90, comp. Ps. xxxiii. 9, in proof of thy glory, and, at the same time, of thy eternal faithfulness.—The subject in ver. 91 *a.* is the heavens, ver. 89, and the earth, ver. 90. They *stand for the judgments of God*, ready to execute these, as obedient servants; as in the days of old, fire frequently came down from heaven, which consumed the adversaries, and hail which slew the enemies of Israel and destroyed their produce. The translation "to thy arrangements, subject to them, they stand even to-day," has against it the standing use of מִשְׁפָּטִים in the Psalm before us, which always means *judgments*. The translation "thy arrangements stand even to-day," does not know how to begin with the second clause.—*Thy law*, ver. 92,—with the promises which are connected with true obedience.—*By them*, ver. 93, in consequence of the promise appended to them. On "thou didst quicken me," comp. ver. 26, 32, 50, 65.—In reference to לִי קַוּוּ, ver. 95, comp. at Ps. lvi. 6.—*Exceedingly broad*, ver. 96, in opposition to the narrow limits within which human perfection is confined. The opposite "broad," shews that in the first clause it is not an end as to time, but an end as to space that is meant.

Ver. 97–104.—Ver. 97. *How I love thy law. It is my meditation all the day.* Ver. 98. *Thy commandments make me wiser than my enemies, for they remain eternally with me.* Ver. 99. *I have more understanding than all my teachers, for thy testimonies are my meditation.* Ver. 100. *I understand more than the ancients, for I observe thy precepts.* Ver. 101. *I keep my feet from all wicked ways, so that I keep thy words.* Ver. 102. *I deviate not from thy judgments, because thou teachest me.* Ver. 103. *How pleasant are thy words to my taste, more than honey to my mouth.* Ver. 104. *From thy precepts I shall get understanding, therefore I hate every lying way.*—*Than my enemies*, ver. 98,—with all their carnal sagacity and cunning, of which, in my simplicity, I deprive myself, Ps. cxvi. 6. They never find, with it all, the way of salvation, to which obedience to

the commandments of God alone furnishes access. The commandments form one complete whole; thy commandments = thy law תּוֹרָתְךָ; hence the explanation of the singular of the verb and the זֹאת. *For they are eternally with me*, and thus the preeminence in wisdom over my enemies is secured to me.—The *teachers* in ver. 99, and the *ancients* in ver. 100, appear as the depositories of natural knowledge. The man who possesses this in the highest degree stands infinitely below him to whom in divine revelation there has been laid open the fountain of true knowledge. Luther: "Antiquity is no help against stupidity, where it does not accord with the commandments of God."—The *teaching* in ver. 102 is inward in its character, comp. ver. 33.—The *discourse*, ver. 103, comprehends a series of individual precepts: hence the explanation of the plural of the verb. It is evident from ver. 147, and the fundamental passage Ps. xix. 10, that the language does not refer to the promises but to the *precepts*, comp. ver. 67.—On "the way of lies," ver. 104, comp. at ver. 29.

Ver. 105–112.—Ver. 105. *Thy word is a lamp to my foot, and a light to my way.* Ver. 106. *I did swear, and I will do it, to observe the judgments of thy righteousness.* Ver. 107. *I am severely humbled; O Lord, quicken me according to thy word.* Ver. 108. *Let the free-will offerings of my mouth please thee, O Lord, and teach me thy judgments.* Ver. 109. *My soul is continually in my hand, and I forget not thy law.* Ver. 110. *The wicked lay snares for me, but I deviate not from thy precepts.* Ver. 111. *Thy testimonies I appropriate to myself for ever, for they are the joy of my heart.* Ver. 112. *I incline my heart to do thy commandments, eternally and without end.*—*I did swear*, ver. 106, at Sinai and in the fields of Moab.—The fountain for the oft-repeated, "quicken me according to thy word," ver. 107, is, as appears specially Lev. xviii. 5 (comp. Deut. vi. 24), where life is promised to the people if they would observe the commandments and judgments of the Lord.—The *prayers* in ver. 108 are represented as spiritual prayer-offerings. Comp. Ps. l. 14, 5.—*My soul is my hand*, ver. 109,—we put into our hands what we are resolved to give away (comp. Jud. xii. 3, 1 Sam. xix. 5)—therefore, *my life is continually in danger*.—The נָחַל in ver. 111 is *to take into possession*. There is a reference to the pas-

sage of the law, where the נָחַל is used of occupancy of Canaan, for example Ex. xxiii. 30. The law is a possession of no less value than the land flowing with milk and honey.

Ver. 113–120.—Ver. 113. *I hate doubtful men, and I love thy law.* Ver. 114. *My hiding place and my shield art thou, I wait upon thy word.* Ver. 115. *Depart from me, ye evil doers, I will keep the commandments of my God.* Ver. 116. *Uphold me according to thy word, that I may live, and let me not be ashamed of my hope.* Ver. 117. *Stand by me, so that I shall be delivered, thus shall I look continually to thy commandments.* Ver. 118. *Thou castest down all who wander from thy commandments, for lie is their deceit.* Ver. 119. *As dross thou dost annihilate all the wicked of the earth, therefore I love thy testimonies.* Ver. 120. *I am afraid before thee, so that my skin shivers, and I dread thy judgments.*—*Doubters*, ver. 113, the סְעִפִּים *a divided man*, ἀνὴρ δίψυχος, Ja. i. 8.—*Depart from me*, ver. 115, is "you can do nothing with me because, &c.," compare at Ps. vi. 8.—*Lie is their deceit*, ver. 118, all their cunning and deceit, with which they seek to destroy the godly, leads to nothing.—*The judgments*, in ver. 120, are the great judgments of the Lord in past ages, comp. Hab. iii. 2: O Lord, I heard thy call (the call of thy great judgments in the days of old), I was afraid." Joyful hope goes hand in hand with *fear*.

Ver. 121–128.—Ver. 121. *I practice justice and righteousness, thou shalt not give me up to my oppressors.* Ver. 122. *Be surety for thy servant, so that it may be well with him, let not the proud oppress me.* Ver. 123. *Mine eyes long after thy salvation, and after the word of thy righteousness.* Ver. 124. *Deal with thy servant according to thy mercy, and teach me thy commandments.* Ver. 125. *I am thy servant, instruct me and let me know thy testimonies.* Ver. 126. *It is time for the Lord to do it, they break thy law.* Ver. 127. *Therefore I love thy commandments more than gold and fine gold.* Ver. 128. *Therefore I approve of every one of thy commandments, I hate every way of lies.*—*For good*, ver. 122, so that it may be well with him, comp. Deut. vi. 24, x. 13, xxx. 9.—*After the word of thy righteousness*, ver. 123, the fulfilment of thy promise, which Thou, the Righteous One, who givest to every one his own, salvation to him to whom it has been promised, hast given.—*Deal with thy servant*, ver. 124: "What ought to

be done" lies concealed in "according to thy mercy," comp. at Ps. cix. 21.—In ver. 126 the common translation is: it is time for the Lord to *work*. But this sense is not ascertained. What the Lord has to do is left out. "They break thy law," by no means compels us to think of "the rebellious Jews." In Is. xxiv. 5, the transgression of the law and of the commandments of God is laid to the charge of the inhabitants of the *world*, and represented as the ground of the judgments executed upon them, comp. Rom. ii. 12, ss. The law has a general human basis; the book of Job makes it manifest that this was clearly acknowledged under the Old Testament. Here we are especially to think of the violation of the righteousness commanded by God, and of love, in the conduct of the heathen towards Israel.—Ver. 127 depends upon Ps. xix. 10. *Therefore*, because of the glory of thy law which had been so much praised in the preceding parts of the Psalm. This general reference is more suitable to the character of the Psalm than the special one to the preceding verse.—Ver. 128 is literally, "all the precepts upon every thing," or whatever they may concern, all without exception, comp. Ez. xliv. 30, and also Num. viii. 16. The connection makes it abundantly evident that the language refers to the *commandments* of God. The expression rejects eclecticism of every kind in reference to the word of God, in accordance with Matth. v. 17–19.

Ver. 129–136.—Ver. 129. *Thy testimonies are wonderful, therefore my soul keeps them.* Ver. 130. *The opening up of thy word gives light, it instructs the simple.* Ver. 131. *I open my mouth, and pine, for I long after thy commandments.* Ver. 132. *Turn to me and be gracious to me, as it is right for those who love thy name.* Ver. 133. *Strengthen my footsteps by thy words, and let no iniquity obtain dominion over me.* Ver. 134. *Deliver me from the oppression of men, so will I keep thy commandments.* Ver. 135. *Let thy face shine upon thy servant, and teach me thy commandments.* Ver. 136. *Mine eyes become brooks of water, because they keep not thy law.*—The opening up of the word of God, ver. 130, is the explanation of the sense of the word imparted by God through his spirit, of which the Psalmist speaks so often and so impressively. To the natural man the doors of the word of God are shut. Those who love the name of God, God in his historical glory, have a *right*

to the manifestations of his grace, ver. 132, not a human but a divine right, resting upon the nature of God, as it is revealed in his word. It is evident from ver. 134 *a.* that the language in ver. 133 *b.* refers to *the external* dominion of unrighteousness, the oppression of enemies. We must hence refer *the strengthening of the footsteps* in the first clause to the external condition, comp. Ps. xl. 2. *Through thy word* = according to thy word, ver. 116; by thy faithfulness, in virtue of thy promise.—On ver. 135 *a.* comp. Ps. lxxx. 3, 7.—The first clause of ver. 136 is from Lam. iii. 48, compare Jer. ix. 17. We must translate: dissolved in water brooks, like water brooks mine eyes come down, comp. Ew. § 281 *e.* The whole clause after עַל is treated like a noun, as is the case in Is. liii. 9, *on account of their not observing, because they do not observe*, namely, in their conduct towards me; comp. the passage already referred to of Lam.: "because of the destroying of the daughter of my people," comp. ver. 139.

Ver. 137–144.—Ver. 137. *Just art thou, O Lord, and righteous in thy judgments.* Ver. 138. *Thou hast prescribed thy testimonies, that they are righteous and very faithful.* Ver. 139. *My zeal consumes me, that my adversaries forget thy words.* Ver. 140. *Thy word is very pure, and thy servant loves it.* Ver. 141. *I am small and despised, I forget not thy precepts.* Ver. 142. *Thy righteousness is an eternal righteousness, and thy law is truth.* Ver. 143. *Trouble and oppression found me, thy commandments are my joy.* Ver. 144. *Righteous are thy testimonies for ever, instruct me that I may live.* The יְשָׁר in ver. 137 refers to the Lord, according to the fundamental passage, Deut. xxxii. 4, and the מִשְׁפָּטֶיךָ is the accus. Ew. § 281 *c.*—The *testimonies* in ver. 138, as is obvious from the first clause, come into notice according to the promise annexed to them; compare at ver. 86, Ps. xciii. 5. *Very faithful*, so that they do not deceive those who keep them.—On ver. 139 compare Ps. lxix. 9. *That they forget*, in their conduct towards me.—Ver. 140 depends upon Ps. xviii. 30. *Thy word*, according to promise and precept.—Ver. 142 *a.* is equivalent to "thy righteousness endureth for ever," comp. Ps. cxv. 16, "the heaven is *heaven* for the Lord." The righteousness of God, the property according to which he gives to every one his own; to his own people salvation (compare Ps. cxi. 3), appears to outward appearance to be

now dead. But the Psalmist perceives in faith its eternal duration. *Thy law is true;* it cannot therefore deceive as to its promises. — At מצא in ver. 143 compare Ps. cxvi. 3. — *Instruct me,* ver. 144,—in thy testimonies which do not feed those who observe them with vain hopes, but bring to them a sure reward.

Ver. 145–152.—Ver. 145. *I call with my whole heart; answer me, O Lord, so shall I keep thy commandments.* Ver. 146. *I call upon thee, help me, so shall I keep thy testimonies.* Ver. 147. *I anticipate the dawning of the day, and cry, I wait for thy words.* Ver. 148. *My eyes anticipate the night watches, that I may meditate upon thy word.* Ver. 149. *Hear my voice according to thy mercy, O Lord, according to thy righteousness quicken me.* Ver. 150. *Those are near who hunt after wickedness, they are far from thy law.* Ver. 151. *Thou art near, O Lord, and all thy commandments are truth.* Ver. 152. *Long ago I knew out of thy testimonies that thou hast founded them for ever.* —On קדם, to *anticipate,* comp. at Ps. xcv. 2. Great zeal in prayer is described in the same way in Ps. lxxxviii. 13: "But I cry to thee, O Lord, and in the morning my prayer shall anticipate thee." The "thee" is easily supplied from the connection; for it is to God that the discourse is directed. The *dawning* is the dawning of the morning.—The eyes of the Psalmist anticipate the night-watches, ver. 148, inasmuch as they are awake when the night-watches come; therefore the expression means, "The night-watches find me awake." Comp. Ps. lxiii. 6, lxxvii. 4, Lam. ii. 19.—The *judgments of God,* in ver. 149, are, those righteous principles which are founded on his own nature, and revealed in his law, according to which salvation must be the portion of the righteous, destruction that of the wicked, comp. ver. 156, 175.—*They are far from thy law,* ver. 150,—the nearer they are to me, the farther are they from the law.—*Thy commandments,* ver. 151,—with the promises which accompany them.—*Long since,* ver. 152, from my first existence. The law itself proceeds throughout on the supposition of its eternal obligation, as it received its institution from the Lord. The formula, for example, is one of constant occurrence: an eternal commandment for your generations.

Ver. 153–160.—Ver. 153. *Behold my misery, and deliver me,*

for I forget not thy law. Ver. 154. *Fight my fight, and deliver me, according to thy word quicken me.* Ver. 155. *Salvation is far from the wicked, for they inquire not after thy commandments.* Ver. 156. *Thy compassion is great, O Lord, according to thy judgments quicken me.* Ver. 157. *Of my persecutors and opponents there are many; I deviate not from thy testimonies.* Ver. 158. *I behold the faithless, and am vexed, who keep not thy word.* Ver. 159. *Behold that I love thy commandments; O Lord, according to thy mercy quicken me.* Ver. 160. *The sum of thy word is truth, and every judgment of thy righteousness endureth for ever.*—On "fight my fight," comp. at Ps. xliii. 1. On "deliver me," Ps. lxix. 18.—*According to thy judgments*, ver. 156, comp. at ver. 149.—In ver. 158, the prayer that God would put an end to the oppressive sight stands in the back ground. On בגד, at Ps. xxv. 3. It is used here of faithlessness towards our neighbours; apparently, as in Is. xxi. 2, of the violation of special relations.—The *sum*, ver. 160, the whole body, Luther: "Thy word is nothing but truth."

Ver. 161–168.—Ver. 161. *Princes persecute me without cause, and my heart quakes before thy words.* Ver. 162. *I rejoice over thy word, as one who findeth much spoil.* Ver. 163. *I hate lies and feel horror at them, I love thy law.* Ver. 164. *Seven times a-day I praise thee, because of the judgments of thy righteousness.* Ver. 165. *Great peace have they who love thy law, and they find nothing to offend them.* Ver. 166. *I hope in thy salvation, O Lord, and do thy commandments.* Ver. 167. *My soul holds thy testimonies, and I love them very much.* Ver. 168. *I hold thy commandments and thy testimonies, for all my ways are before thee.*—*My heart quakes*, ver. 161, with reverence, which excludes fear, and goes hand in hand with joyful hope, comp. ver. 120. The *words* are the glorious promises which the Lord gives to his people and his threatenings against his enemies, comp., for example, Deut. xxxii.—On "lies," at ver. 163, comp. at ver. 29.—By the "judgments of the Lord," in ver. 160, we ought to understand that *both* the righteous actions or judgments, and his righteous sayings or his law, are meant, comp. ver. 62, 165.—*All my ways are before thee*, ver. 168,—thou who art the righteous recompenser knowest them.

Ver. 169–176.—Ver. 169. *Let my prayer come before thee, Lord; according to thy word instruct me.* Ver. 170. *Let my prayer come before thee: according to thy word deliver me.* Ver. 171. *My lips shall stream forth with thy praise, when thou teachest me thy commandments.* Ver. 172. *My tongue shall respond to thy word, for all thy commandments are righteousness.* Ver. 173. *Let thy hand help me, for I choose thy commandments.* Ver. 174. *I long after thy salvation, O Lord, and thy law is my delight.* Ver. 175. *Let my soul live and praise thee, and let thy judgments help me.* Ver. 176. *I went astray like a lost sheep, seek thy servant, for I forget not thy commandments.*—In ver. 169, 170, the two prayers of the Psalmist, the one for strength to fulfil the law, and the other for external deliverance, are inseparably connected together. The fulfilment of the first is the basis of the fulfilment of the second, comp. Ps. xc. 11–17. *According to thy word instruct me,*—in accordance with thy promise, ver. 25, 65, 107, as given for example in Deut. xxx. 6: "And the Lord circumcise thy heart, and the heart of the seed, to love the Lord thy God with all thy heart and with all thy soul, that thou mayest live."—The דַּבְּיעַ, ver. 171, is *to cause to bubble up*, Ps. xix. 2, lxxviii. 2.—The עָנָה in ver. 172 has its usual sense, *to respond*, comp. Ps. cxlvii. 7. Every expression in which we praise God, his word, or his works, is a response. —*Thy law*, ver. 174, with its promises.—*Thy judgments*, ver. 175, comp. 149, 156.—The "going astray" in ver. 170 is a figurative expression denoting helplessness; or, the sufferer appears under the figure of one who has gone astray. *A lost sheep* is one which has escaped from the flock and the shepherd, comp. Jer. l. 6.

PSALM CXX.—CXXXIV.

OR THE PILGRIM BOOK.

These Psalms have much in common. The tone never rises in any of them above a certain height, and descends very gradually from that height when gained; they all bear the character of

simplicity; with the exception of Ps. cxxxii., which partakes the least of the peculiar characteristics of these poems, they are all of short compass; in all of them, with the exception of the Psalm above mentioned, the parallelism of the clauses is little attended to; no one of these Psalms bears an individual character; they all refer to the whole church of God,[a] with the exception, in some measure, of only Ps. cxxvii., which, without being individual, places before us, in the first instance, the particular members of the church, but which the collector has applied also to the circumstances of the whole community. Finally, all bear in the title the same name שִׁיר הַמַּעֲלוֹת, or as it stands in the title of Ps. cxxi. שִׁיר לַמַּעֲלוֹת.

Five of these fifteen Psalms bear the name of the author at their head, four that of David—viz., Ps. cxxii., cxxiv., cxxxi., cxxxiii., one that of Solomon, Ps. cxxvii., ten on the other hand are nameless. The ten nameless Psalms again have a certain peculiar impression stamped upon them, distinguishing them from those above mentioned all of which are connected together by no common tie, but stand isolated from each other. All were sung when the people of God were placed in troublous circumstances; all are *suitable* to the relations (these relations come more particularly forward in some of them, especially in Ps. cxx., cxxi., cxxv.) which existed after the deliverance from the captivity, at the time when the building of the temple was interrupted, and the contests with the Samaritans were carried on. That Psalm cxxxiv., where mention is made of the house of the Lord and the sanctuary, must not be removed from the circle of these relations, is obvious from the remarks which were made at page 381 of this volume, (comp. vol. i., p. 483), according to which even the tent which existed before the erection of the first temple, and stood on its site, was called the *house of the Lord*, and was considered as the *sanctuary*. Further, all bear the cha-

[a] Thus Lampe: The identity of the title demands that the subject of all the fifteen Psalms be considered as the same; for it does not permit us to doubt that they have been brought together, and arranged agreeably to a certain plan. It will at once be admitted that the condition of one person or place cannot be made up of the various positions which alternately succeed each other. Sometimes also it is not one person but a whole assembly that speaks, Ps. cxxii., cxxiii., cxxiv., &c. Hence we infer that these songs relate to the state of the universal church, which is termed the Israel of God, Ps. cxxiv. 1, cxxv. 5, cxxviii. 6, cxxx. 8, cxxxi. 3.

racter of pensive melancholy. The fundamental thought in all is: the providence of God watching over his church.[a]

The title must be of some importance in explaining the peculiarities which are common to all these fifteen Psalms. Before, however, we can make any use of it we must determine its *import*. This has been very decidedly ascertained. We must, however, limit ourselves to the examination of those opinions *which have been most widely disseminated;* we cannot allow ourselves to enter upon the views of individnals. 1. The translation, "Step-Psalms" (Sept. *ὠδαὶ τῶν ἀναβαθμῶν*, Vulg. *Psalms of degrees*), has found many defenders: it is moreover a very favourite one with Jewish expositors. The name of the Psalms is thus supposed to be derived from their being appointed to be sung on certain steps in the sanctuary, according to several, on the fifteen steps between the court of the men and the court of the women. This exposition is the one which is in reality adopted by Luther, who translates: "a song in high chorus." For that he did not, as Gesenius and others suppose, after the example of Saadias, Gaon, and Abenesra, imagine that an elevation of the voice was meant, is clear from his own words in the introduction to these Psalms, where, after rejecting the explanation of Lyra about the fifteen steps of the temple, on each of which one of these Psalms was sung, he says, "I adopt the simplest of all views, and maintain that these Psalms were so named, because they were sung in a high place, in high chorus by the Levites or priests. . . . I consider that these Psalms were sung not by the crowd of people who were in the temple, but by some distinguished individuals who sung before the rest; they were therefore sung or at least begun from a high place." Luther therefore adopts the idea that מעלות denotes *the place where the Psalms were sung*, but supposes that place to have been not the steps themselves, but some high place to which the ascent was by steps. No etymological objection can be urged against the translation, "Step-Psalms." The fact, however, that some of these Psalms, particularly Ps. cxxi., cxxii., could not possibly have been sung in the temple, is decisive against this view.

[a] Lampe.: The general argument of these Psalms is the celebration of the faithfulness and the constancy of God in preserving his church in the midst of all the billows of temptation in the sea of this world.

2. Several understand the title as denoting the peculiarity in point of form of these Psalms. This view is in accordance with the hypothesis started by Gesenius, and latterly defended by him in his Thesaurus. He supposes that the title denotes a certain step-rhythm which occurs in these Psalms, the nature of which he describes as follows: "that sometimes the last clause of the verse, more frequently a part of it, carries forward a thought or an expression into the following verse, where it has another turn given to it, is expanded, or receives something added to it." Thus, for example, Ps. cxxi.: "I direct my eyes to the hills. From whence shall *help* come to me? My *help* comes from the Lord, the creator of heaven and of earth. . . . He lets not thy feet slide, thy *Keeper sleep*s not. Behold the keeper of Israel *sleeps* not and slumbers not." The hypothesis, however, is untenable. It is quite true indeed that this Psalm shews something of the kind; but it is by no means true that the series of Psalms is characterised by it *throughout*, which, if the hypothesis were true, must have been the case. We may compare, for example, Ps. cxxvii., cxxviii., cxxxi., cxxxii., where nothing whatever of the kind occurs. It does not occur even once throughout in any one of these Psalms; yea the above-mentioned Psalm, cxxi., is the only one in which it is at all prominent. The assertion of Gesenius that the term is applied *a potiori*, irrespective of the fact that the appearances are few in number and weak, is inadmissible on the ground that *every separate song* bears the name of *a song of the Maaloth*. *Further*, we saw that all these Psalms possess a number of characteristic peculiarities in common. We are entitled to expect that the title which is common to them all, should contain a key to the explanation of this fact; and we must regard it as a touchstone for the correctness of any explanation of the title that it serves this end. According to this canon the hypothesis in question must be rejected. The remaining peculiarities of the Psalms can by no means be considered as flowing from the one which, according to it, is indicated the title. Next the circumstance that למעלות stands instead of המעלות is quite decisive. This variation, which assuredly is not accidental, shows in what way the more ambiguous genitive in the other titles is to be interpreted; that "a Song of the Maaloth" is equivalent to a Song for the Maaloth. After

these decisive reasons, there is scarcely any need for adding that the explanation in question has nothing whatever to bear it out in an etymological point of view, inasmuch as the assumed figurative use of the מעלות nowhere occurs; and that the name itself would not even be a suitable one, as it would lead us to expect an ascending progress, a gradation, whereas it is merely a repetition that exists.

3. The translation, "Pilgrim Songs," or songs to be sung on the journey to Jerusalem, has found very many supporters. This translation, which occurs in Theodotion (ἄσμα της αναβασέως), and in Aq. and Symm. (εἰς τὰς ἀναβάσεις) has the *usus loquendi* entirely on its side. The verb עלה is the standing expression for the journey up to Jerusalem (which was considered as the civil and religious metropolis), more on account of its *moral* than on account of its physical height. The word before us, מעלה, is used itself of the journey to Jerusalem, Ezra vii. 9. The title of Ps. xxx. is altogether analogous to the title before us construed in this way: "A Song of the dedication of the house," instead of "a Song intended to be sung at the dedication of the house." The supporters of this exposition are again divided into two parties.

(*a*.) The idea adopted by Ewald is a very old one: that the title points out those Psalms which were sung by Israel *on the way home from Babylon*. This view is expressly given in the titles of the old Syrian translation, and also by Chrysostom and Theodoret. The consideration, however, is altogether against it, that the return from Babylon is never simply denoted a מעלה, a pilgrimage; Ezr. vii. 9, which has been appealed to, is not *in favour of* מעלה being so used, but *against it*, for the journey homeward of the exiles is not simply termed מעלה, but מעלה מבבל, and even in Ezr. ii. 1, עלה is more fully defined. This translation, moreover, does not sufficiently justify the use of the plural. The explanation of this becomes satisfactory only when the songs are considered as intended for successive pilgrims to Jerusalem. Farther, according to this explanation, we must, without any good reason, affirm that the titles of several of these Psalms, according to which, David and Solomon are to be considered as their authors, give false information. It follows, at all events, from the

titles, that the collectors of the Canon had other views in regard to the design of these Psalms. In like manner, we must shut our ears to internal reasons, according to which these Psalms really belong to David and Solomon as their authors, or at least to times previous to the captivity. In this case also, it will be impossible to explain the very marked difference to which we have already adverted, between the nameless Psalms and those which bear a name, which, according to this hypothesis, must all be classed together. Finally, even the nameless Psalms, considered in themselves, by no means favour this hypothesis. Not one of them refers to the circumstances of the returning captives. And on the other hand, several of them, such as Ps. cxx., cxxvi., manifestly refer to the circumstances of the *already-settled new colony;* and it is the more difficult to separate the rest from these circumstances, to which they all at least remarkably correspond, as they are all bound together into one whole by their formal arrangement, and by their unity of design, tone, and expression.

(*b.*) Other expositors seek the origin of the appellation in the fact that *these songs were sung by the pilgrims who went up yearly to Jerusalem, at the great festivals.* This explanation is undoubtedly the correct one. The עלה is the usual expression for these festival-journeys; comp. Ps. cxxii. 4, Ex. xxxiv. 24, 1 Kings xii. 27, 28. The המעלות, *the* journeys to Jerusalem, by way of pre-eminence, can only be those ordinary journeys which were yearly repeated and prescribed in the law; comp. Ps. cxxii. 4. All other journeys to Jerusalem would have needed some expression added to define them. *Further*, the oldest to all appearance of these pilgrim-songs, that, viz., which was composed by David soon after the elevation of Zion to the sanctuary, and at the commencement of the pilgrimages to it, Ps. cxxii. contains two clauses explanatory of the מעלות, corresponding to the explanation of the משכיל in Ps. xxxii., viz., "we will go to the house of the Lord," in ver. 1, and "to which the tribes go up," עלו in ver. 4. The circumstance, moreover, that some of these Psalms have, in accordance with the most manifest internal marks, been used for this purpose, is quite decisive. This is the case with Ps. cxxi., which, according to ver. 1, was designed to be sung in view of the mountains of Jerusalem, and is manifestly an even-

ing song for the sacred band of pilgrims, to be sung in the last night watch, the figures of which are also peculiarly suitable for a pilgrim-song; and with Ps. cxxii. which, according to the express announcement in the introduction, was sung, when the sacred pilgrim trains had reached the gates of Jerusalem, and halted for the purpose of forming in order, for the solemn procession into the sanctuary, Ps. cxxxiv. Besides this we may add *finally*, that, according to this interpretation, all the common peculiarities of these Psalms are easily accounted for. The simplicity, the want of the parallelism, the artless way of forming a transition by a word retained from the preceding verse, the brevity, all these are peculiarities of sacred popular and pilgrim song.

The objections which have been urged against this interpretation are insignificant. Thus it has been said, that it is scarcely possible to conceive that such mournful songs as are these Psalms to some extent, could have been sung in the course of the joyful journeys to Jerusalem. Just as if the tone of these festival journeys would not be entirely dependent upon the then existing condition of the people! No one will deny that the nameless Psalms truly emanated from the innermost feelings of the people at the time when they were originally composed; and the people could at that time find in them only a representation of their own state. Next it is objected that several of these Psalms contain no reference to such a special occasion. But such a reference was not in every case necessary; the contents might be general, and the indicating of the purpose of the Psalms might be attended to only in the form and appearance which they were made to assume; and this is really the case.

The practice of travelling to Jerusalem at the festivals had already taken deep root even in the days of David and Solomon. We see this clearly from the conduct of Jeroboam, in 1 Kings xii. 28, compare also at Ps. cxxii. It was hence very natural that David, who employed his gift of sacred song in ministering to all the wants of the people of God, should attend to this matter also, and that Solomon should continue the work. The pilgrimages suffered grievous interruption from the separation of the ten tribes; and it was only in the days of the new colony that they regained their ancient importance. In these days a third pilgrim poet arose to take his place alongside of the two ancient ones,

who wrought up his own productions along with those of his predecessors into one well-arranged whole, a pilgrim-book.

The whole is grouped around Ps. cxxvii., which was composed by Solomon, who stands in middle between the first and the last of the pilgrim poets. On both sides there stands a heptade of pilgrim songs consisting of two Psalms composed by David and five new ones, which have no name. The seven is divided both times by the four and the three. Each heptade contains the name of Jehovah twenty-four times; each of the connected groups, Ps. cxx.—cxxiii., cxxiv.—cxxvi., cxxviii.—cxxxi., cxxxii.—cxxxiv., twelve times; this cannot be accidental, and it renders it evident that the collector of the whole must be identical with the author of the nameless Psalms.

The unity is not one merely of *form*; it also refers to the *thoughts*. The old Psalms are not thrown in loosely; but the author of the nameless Psalms has interwoven them with his own into one whole;—a task which, as the Psalms originated in different circumstances and objects, could be accomplished only by resolving not to keep to the *main thought*, but by laying the emphasis upon those thoughts which were secondary. Ps. cxxiv. is the only one which, in regard to its fundamental tone, is peculiarly suitable for his purpose; it is distinguished from its nameless neighbourhood only by its courageous and powerful tone. He takes up Ps. cxxvii. on the comforting side, while the prevailing aspect of it originally was *hortatory*. In Ps. cxxxi. he sounds the cry, "Wait O Israel upon the Lord," in ver. 3, comp. Ps. cxxx. 7. In Ps. cxxxiii., the words, which in themselves are merely subordinate, "for there the Lord has ordained his blessing, life for ever more," are brought forward into the foreground. That the author was driven by necessity to this course, that he was obliged to render unyielding materials subservient to his purpose, is manifest from this, that the Psalms which have names, and those which have none, though they fit in well enough to each other, cannot have proceeded from the same source. This view is still further confirmed by the circumstance that each one of the Psalms which have names has its own peculiar thought and its own peculiar colouring, while the nameless ones are all pervaded by the same common fundamental thought, and are all characterised by one common tone. That the collector was not satisfied with a mere external

juxtaposition of the pilgrim songs is clear also from this, that no Psalm with a name stands at the beginning or end of both heptades, but that the Psalms which have names are rather enclosed and hemmed in by those which have none,—that two Psalms with names never follow each other, that the last Psalm is remarkably suitable for a conclusion to the whole, and was composed to all appearance for the purpose of serving this object.

The Introduction to the first heptade consists of a pair of Psalms, cxx., cxxi., which brings us into the relations of the present, represents Israel's conflict and distress, and his hope in God. The next in the series is a Psalm composed by David, cxxii., which represents Jerusalem's glory, and expresses wishes and prayers for her salvation. With what is said there about the glory of Jerusalem, and with the wishes and prayers for her salvation, the *present* stands in marked *contrast;* and Ps. cxxiii. contains a pathetic prayer for the removal of this contrast. In the *second* group, faith half lying in the dust, rises up in the believing and magnanimous song of David, Ps. cxxiv., which finds its echo in Ps. cxxv. and cxxvi.

In the second heptade Ps. cxxviii., forming an appendix to Ps. cxxvii., the one composed by Solomon, pronounces God fearing Israel to be happy. The Lord shall remove (Ps. cxxix., cxxx.) the misery of the present which appears to testify to the contrary. Let Israel, in obedience to the exhortation of his royal Psalmist David, only wait upon the Lord! Ps. cxxxi.—He shall cause David's horn to bud, and shall prepare a lamp for his Anointed, Ps. cxxxii. He has ordained a blessing for Zion, life for evermore, Ps. cxxxiv. He shall bless his people out of Zion, Ps. cxxxiv.

If the Pilgrim-book belongs to the time when the building of the temple was interrupted, it stands where it does, exactly in its proper place. It follows a dodecade of Psalms, which were composed on the occasion of the laying of the foundation-stone of the temple.

PSALM CXX.

May the Lord, who has recently delivered Israel out of great trouble, ver. 1, *now* also deliver him out of the oppression in which he finds himself involved in consequence of slandering wickedness, ver. 2; he will do it, and will recompense on the slanderers their wickedness on their own head, ver. 3, 4. In order that he may be the more inclined to do this, the church raises, ver. 5–7, a soft lamentation over the suffering which had been prepared for her while at peace, by these peace-hating slanderers. —The formal arrangement is very simple. The seven is divided by the four and the three.

The situation is exactly described: after the deliverance out of great misery, and in a new suffering brought on by *slander*, which proceeds from those with whom the Psalmist must dwell. That this is Israel is clear from the analogy of the other Psalms of this collection, not one of which bears a purely *individual* character, from ver. 5, where the dwelling by (not *in*) the tents of Kedar is most naturally referred to the relation of one nation to another, from the parallel passage, Ps. cxxiii. 4, where the language refers to the people. From these firm positions it will not be difficult to ascertain the historical occasion which has been quite correctly fixed by several, and in the best way by Tiling, disquis. de cant. adscensionum, Bremen 1765, p. 66 ss. The church of the Lord, besides open and decided enemies, has to suffer also from *false brethren*, who, because their pretensions cannot be fully acknowledged to their satisfaction, are embittered and enraged, and seek revenge by all means, but especially by the weapons of lies and slanders. Israel learned this, after the return from captivity, from the painful conduct of the Samaritans. These still continuing, to all intents and purposes, *heathens* at heart, supposed that a half acknowledgment of Israel's God (an acknowledgment not at all proceeding from the deep root of faith), a God who had not made himself known to them, and whom they served at their own hand, would give them a claim to be participators with Israel in the kingdom of God. When Israel began to build the new temple, they came forward to them, according to Ezra iv., with the proposal, "We will build

with you, for we seek your God as well as you." And when Israel met their ungrounded claims in an humble, quiet, but decided manner, and said: It is not becoming that you and we build the house of our God, but we alone will build the house of the Lord the God of Israel, "then the people in the land hindered the hand of the people of Judah, and terrified them in building; and hired counsellors against them to frustrate their purpose all the days of Cyrus king of Persia, even until the reign of Darius king of Persia." Exasperated, they endeavoured, by lying accusations, particularly as to the desire for dominion, and the rebellious purposes of the Israelites, to stir up the *open* heathen, under whose power the Israelites then were living; and they succeeded in this for a considerable time. Still the God of Israel helped them; and in spite of all opposition, the temple and city, as recorded at length in the books of Ezra and Nehemiah, were brought to a prosperous termination.

Ver. 1–4.—*A Song of the Pilgrims.*—Ver. 1. *I cried to the Lord in my trouble, and he heard me.* Ver. 2. *O Lord, deliver my soul from the lips of lies, from the tongue of deceit.* Ver. 3. *What shall he give to thee, and what shall he add to thee, thou tongue of deceit.* Ver. 4. *Sharp arrows of the mighty with genista-fuel.*—In ver. 1, it is obvious, on comparing Ps. cxix. 26, cxviii. 5, cxvi. 1, 2, 4, 5, cxv. 12, that we cannot translate "I *call* and he *hears*," but, as is also most correct in point of grammar, "I *called* and he *heard* me," and that the Psalmist places his allusion to answers which he had formerly obtained before his prayer for further deliverance, for the purpose of quickening his hope and enabling him to pray rightly in *faith*, Ja. i. 6. The answers already obtained refer, according to the above passages, chiefly to the *deliverance from captivity*. The צרתה is the more full, sonorous form, as at Ps. xliv. 26—*My soul*, ver. 2,—because the deceitful tongue had exposed *his life* to danger, comp. the constantly occurring expression in Ps. cxix., "quicken me," for example, ver. 88, and "deliver my soul," Ps. cxvi. 4. The Samaritans aimed at destroying the national existence of the Israelites, the centre-point of which was the temple. A "deceit-tongue" is a tongue which is wholly deceit, comp. "I am peace," ver. 7, and in reference to the connection of both verses in the stat. absol. at Ps. lx. 3. The רמיה is never an

adject.; and the corresponding word שֶׁקֶר is against the idea that it is. That we are not to think of "hypocritical promises to keep peace," but of wicked slandering, is obvious from the parallel passage, Ps. cxix. 69, 78, Ps. xxxi. 18. The *recompense* also of ver. 4 belongs to the same region.—The prayer is followed by *confidence* in ver. 3 and 4. This is expressed with lively feeling in the form of *an address to the slanderers*. The subject to both verbs in ver. 3 is the Lord, who had been addressed in the preceding verse; this is all the more obvious, as allusion is made to the usual form of swearing, "God do to thee and more also," 1 Sam. iii. 17, xiv. 44, which denotes some very severe and permanent evil, with the change of the "do" into the "give," used ironically, a use of the word intended to point to the *good* results of their wickedness which the slanderers had hoped for. The deceitful tongue of the slanderer is the object to which the address is directed. Ver. 4 contains the answer to the question in ver. 3: "He shall give thee," &c. The "arrows of the warrior" corresponds to the "give," and the "genista fuel" to the "add," next to them. On "sharp warrior-arrows," comp. Ps. xlv. 5, where it is said of the God-warrior: "Thine arrows are sharp, nations fall under thee, they pierce the heart of the enemies of the king." In reference to the genista (Luther falsely: juniper), Robinson, P. 1st, p. 336, says, "The Arabians suppose it furnishes the best wood-fuel." That the term is stronger than the preceding one is evident from the two portions of the first clause, the latter of which is stronger than the former. The dealings of God are regulated by the law of *retaliation*. Slanders had wounded like sharp arrows, and had burned like genista-fuel. —The two verses have been misunderstood in various ways. Luther, who is generally followed, translates: "what can the false tongue do to thee, and what can it effect? It is like a sharp arrow of a strong one, like fire in junipers." He supposes the question to be directed to the caluminated person. "David's design in it is to the stir himself up to take occasion to bring an accusation against the cunning tongue." But in this case there seems to be no reason for putting the question, as no doubt could exist as to the ruinous effects of the slandering; the undeniable allusion to the common form of swearing is lost; the comparison with sharp arrows of *a warrior* (and גִּבּוֹר can only be translated in this way)

is too *noble* a one for slander; and, finally, the analogy of Ps. lii. is in favour of the address being directed to these slanderers. De Wette translates ver. 3, "What does the tongue of deceit give you, and what does it do for you (the give in a good sense), and considers ver. 4 as descriptive of the ruinous effects of slander. It does no good to you, and it does much injury to others. But the distinction between the deceitful tongue and the slanderer is contrary to ver. 2, and if it existed, the לשון would not be construed with the accusative, which can be accounted for only by supposing that the deceitful tongue stands for the slanderers. Then, according to this translation, the allusion to the usual form of swearing is lost; and the גבור also occasions difficulty. Ewald translates: "how shall he punish thee, and how shall he chastise thee, thou deceitful tongue, ye sharp murderer-arrows, with glowing genista-fuel?" But in order to favour this translation it is necessary for us arbitrarily to substitute *murderer-arrows* for warrior-arrows; arrows and fuel also can scarcely be used as the *object* of punishment, when they are so frequently seen as the *instruments* of punishment; comp. in reference to the arrows for example Ps. vii. 13, and to fuel, Ps. cxl. 10, xviii. 12, 13.—Ver. 3 and 4 form the *highest prophetical point* of the Psalm to which the Psalmist had ascended by the two preliminary steps, realization of a former deliverance, and prayer for deliverance from present distress. A *popular song* cannot long maintain such a height. The Psalmist therefore descends in the second part, and concludes with a simple description of his mournful condition in a soft elegaic tone.

Ver. 5–7.—Ver. 5. *Wo is me, that I tarry under Mesech, dwell by the tents of Kedar.* Ver. 6. *It is wearisome to my soul to dwell by those who hate peace.* Ver. 7. *I am peace, but when I speak they begin war.*—The literal view of ver. 5 is impossible, as Israel never had any thing to do with Mesech, the Moschi who dwelt in the remotest parts of the world, and as mention is made of two countries most remote from each other in which the Psalmist could not possibly dwell at the same time. Ver. 6 gives the key. According to it Mesech and Kedar are both figurative expressions *for such as hate peace.* Mesech appears in Ezek. xxxviii. 2 as the chief vassel of Gog, the representative of the *heathen barbarian world.* Even here the ground of the choice

is that so little is known about him: the more distant, the more fierce. Love of fighting was peculiar to the Arabians, of whom the *Kedarenes* formed a part. This had been already mentioned in Gen. xvi. 4 as a characteristic feature of the Ishmaelites. On the connection of גור with the accus. comp. at Ps. v. 4.—In reference to the רבת in ver. 6, comp. at Ps. lxv. 9. The *soul* is named because the suffering deeply affected the Psalmist's heart.—*Peace*, in ver. 7,—entirely peaceful. *When I speak*,—I need only to open my mouth, and they seek to find in the most harmless words an occasion for new hostilities.

PSALM CXXI.

The Psalm is a simple expression of heartfelt trust in God, the *Keeper* of his church. We perceive here nothing of the mighty billows and tumults of the inner man who again seeks and finds rest, which Ewald, proceeding on a false construction of ver. 1, would have us perceive; but the Psalmist, or the church in whose name he speaks, from the very first stands above the suffering and looks down upon it from the clear height of trust in God.

In ver. 1 and 2 the church speaks itself, (*Israel*, ver. 4); and in ver. 3–8 is addressed. The remarks made in the introduction to Ps. xci. are applicable to this change. The speaker in ver. 3 ss. is the Psalmist or rather the Spirit, whose organ he is, watching over the church. The advocates of *choruses* in the Psalms have taken possession of this fact. They want, however, the necessary previous legitimation; and the presumption is not in *favour* of such external modes of interpretation but *against* them.

The Psalm consists of an *Introduction* and a *Conclusion*, each of two; and a kernel of four verses, which are likewise made up of two parts; so that the Psalm throughout is ruled by the number four. The transition from the Introduction to the mainbody is marked by the change of person. The latter is held together by the threefold naming of the keeper of Israel; the Conclusion by the threefold "he shall keep."[a] The name Jehovah occurs five

a In the use of שמר which occurs with marked frequency, there is perhaps an allusion to Samaria, the capital of the then enemies of the people of God, the object being to deprive that name of all its terror.

times; three times in the introduction and conclusion, and twice in the main body. With the two of the preceding Psalm, the five, which, as the signature of the half, and of what is unfinished, points to a completion, makes up the seven. This, as is usual, is divided by the three in the introduction and conclusion of our Psalm, and the four.

The contents of the Psalm are altogether suitable to such circumstances as are more exactly described in Ps. cxx. The condition of the people appears as an oppressed one: they look out for *help*, they are in danger of their foot sliding; they cleave to their keeper, they hope that he will preserve their *soul*, their very existence is exposed to danger. According to ver. 8 the people appear engaged in an important *undertaking*, in expectation that the Lord will forward them in it.

The title which designates the Psalm as a pilgrim song is confirmed in ver. 1, according to which the Psalm was intended to be sung in view of the mountains of Jerusalem, which here, in accordance with Psalm cxx., again appears as the seat of the Lord. It is hence impossible to conceive of the Psalm as having been composed during the captivity, as many have done.[a] The *figures* also of the Psalm are remarkably suitable for a pilgrim song, the sliding of the foot as an emblem of misfortune, the shadow as an emblem of protection, heat and cold as an emblem of conflict, outgoing and incoming as an emblem of undertakings.

The idea is a very probable one, that the Psalm was the evening song of the sacred pilgrim band, sung on retiring to rest upon the last evening, when the long wished for termination of their wandering, the mountains of Jerusalem had come into view in the distance. In this case we obtain a suitable connection with the following Psalm, which would be sung *one* station further on, when the pilgrims were at the gates of Jerusalem. In this case we find an explanation of the fact, that in the middle point of the Psalm there stands the Lord as the *keeper* of Israel, with reference to the declaration, "I keep thee," which was addressed to the patriarch as he slept on his pilgrimage; and in this case also "he neither slumbereth nor sleepeth," is seen into its true light.

[a] The windows of Daniel who lived during the captivity, were, according to ch. vi. 11, opened during prayer toward Jerusalem, in remembrance of its early glory, and in anticipation of its glorious future; he did not however seek help from Jerusalem but from heaven.

Ver. 1 and 2.—*A song for the pilgrims.* Ver. 1. *I direct my eyes to the hills. From whence shall come my aid!* Ver. 2 *My aid cometh from the Lord, the Creator of heaven and earth.*— The phrase נשא עינים with אל cannot be "to lift up the eyes to something high," (Gen. xxxix. 7, Ezek. xxiii. 27, xviii. 6, are against this), but only either "to open the eyes" or "to stretch the eyes," according to "where your treasure is there will your heart be also." The kindred expression נשא נפש or לב with אל is in favour of the latter view; comp. at Ps. xxiv. 4, xxv. 1, also Lam. iii. 41. That the language does not refer to an inactive desire, a mere *longing for home*, but that the eyes are directed to the hills seeking and expecting help, is evident from the second clause, from ver. 2, and also from the parallel passage, Ps. cxxiii. 1, "I lift my eyes to thee who dwellest in the heaven," where the omnipotent helper in heaven corresponds to the *mountains* here; comp. also "for my eyes are to thee, O Lord God," Ps. cxli. 8, xxv. 15. The *hills* are the hills which the speaker has before his eyes. Every doubt on this point is removed by the *connection*, according to which we can only think of such mountains as could furnish help to the Psalmist. It is Mount Zion that is meant, the hill of the Lord, the seat of his church upon earth; and mountains in the plural are referred to only in so far as this mountain is a particular point of a high mountain range (comp. at Ps. lxxxvii. 1) which was seen as one whole in the distance. The mountains of Palestine cannot be meant, for these never appear as the seat of the Lord, as the treasure house of help for his people: in Ex. xv. 17, the hill is the hill of the sanctuary, the spiritual seat of Israel. Mount Zion, with its sanctuary, every where occurs in the same connection in which the hills are here introduced; comp. for example Ps. iii. 4, xiv. 7, xx. 2, xliii. 3, lxviii. 16, lxxxvii. 1. The parallel passage, also, Ps. cxxv. 2, where the mountains which surround and protect Jerusalem appear as an emblem of God's protection of his people, is decidedly in favour of the mountains of Jerusalem. Luther and others translate the second clause "from which help comes to me." But מאין is always used *interrogatively*, "from which?" it is so, even in Joshua ii. 4, where the question is only an indirect and dependant one. The question here, however, is not to be considered as expressive of doubt or uncertainty. The

first clause is against this. According to it the Psalmist is perfectly decided as to where help is to be sought and found. The question is intended, like that in Ps. cxx. 3, xxiv. 3, to give occasion to the joyful *answer* announced in ver. 2. As this answer stands in the back ground, the second clause is in reality parallel to the first. The verse before us has been misunderstood in various ways. According to many expositors, the Psalmist, as Calvin expresses it, first personates an unbeliever, and represents the weakness natural to the whole human family, and then rises, in ver. 2, to faith: *I look round about me on the hills, and seek anxiously for help in every direction*, &c. The mountains in this case, according to several, denote every thing in the world which is high and glorious; according to others, specially the potentates and kingdoms of the earth; according to Ewald, regard is to be had to the mountains in the distance, "if from afar in any direction help will come."[a] This sense, however, is not expressed with sufficient clearness; and the hills themselves are the object of trust and hope. And the analogy of the other pairs of verses is decidedly against this view; the contents of the first verse are everywhere strengthened in the second. Next, ver. 2 would come in too much unconnected; the contrast which all these expositors introduce without any remark could not fail to have been distinctly marked;—"*but* my help;" others introduce before the second clause of the first verse: "*yet* whence cometh;" finally, the strikingly harmonious parallel passages are decisive in favour of our translation, especially Ps. cxxiii. 1, cxxv. 1, 2.—The name applied to the Lord, *the Creator of heaven and earth*, in ver. 2 (comp. at Ps. cxv. 15), points to the inexhaustible abundance of means of help, which he possesses; despair would be madness in any one who has such a God to help him.

Ver. 3–6.—Ver. 3. *May he not suffer thy foot to slide; may thy Keeper not sleep.* Ver. 4. *Behold the Keeper of Israel sleeps not and slumbers not.* Ver. 5. *The Lord is thy Keeper, the Lord is thy shade at thy right hand.* Ver. 6. *By day the sun shall not hurt thee, nor the moon by night.*—The לֹא, ver. 3, is always the subjective negative, "according to the

a Thus Amyr.: "They cast their eyes in every direction upon the neighbouring hills, and look around on every side, to see if any where there appear friendly and auxiliary troops."

feeling and thought of the speaker," Ewald § 310 *a.* Our verse expresses hope and desire; the following verse furnishes the higher *confirmation.* The sliding of the foot is a frequent description of misfortune, for example, Ps. xxxviii. 16, lxvi. 9, and a very natural one in mountainous Canaan, where a single slip of the foot was often attended with great danger. The language here naturally refers to complete lasting misfortune. The second clause depends on Gen. xxviii. 15, "Behold I am with thee and *keep thee* in all thy ways." The application of what was said in the first instance to the patriarch, to his posterity, is all the more natural, as the vision was imparted to the former, as the representative of his whole *race.* The expression, "I keep thee," is the text on which our whole Psalm is the commentary. The expression, "sleeps not," shows how gross are the imaginations of human unbelief which are here met.—The difference between ver. 3 and ver. 4 does not, as Calvin and others suppose, consist in this, that what is promised in ver. 3, to the individual, is applied here on the subject of the providence of God to the whole people. It is with the whole community that the Psalmist has every where to do. The difference consists simply in the relation of the objective to the subjective negative. In accordance with the former, we find standing here, the word "behold," which points to some patent, undoubted fact. Luther translates "sleeps not nor slumbers;" the translation commonly given at present is, "slumbers not nor sleeps." Thus Calvin, "If God does not even once slumber, there is the less cause for fearing at any time an ordinary sleep." But the idea that נום signifies *to slumber* is founded altogether on the false supposition that a climax is to be found in the passage before us, and in the parallel passage, which agrees word for word, Is. v. 27, where the same thing is said of Israel's enemies,—a passage which the Psalmist to all appearance had distinctly before his eye, setting the wakeful Keeper in heaven over against the wakeful enemies upon earth. In every other passage, it is used of a deep sleep, Nah. iii. 18, Is. lvi. 10, Ps. lxxvi. 5; and it has this sense also in Arabic. And, on the other hand, ישן signifies to *fall asleep;* this indeed is its original and prevailing sense, comp. at Ps. iv. 8. Hence we must translate: he does not sleep (generally) and he does not fall asleep.—The *shade,* ver. 5, is a figurate expression for *protec-*

tion and *shelter*, more appropriate in the hot east than with us, and especially suitable in the mouth of pilgrims who had hourly experienced the severity of the heat of the sun, and the pleasant refreshment of the shade. Allusion is made, as is apparent, to Num. xiv. 9, where it is said of the *enemies* of Israel: "their shade is departed from them, and the Lord is with us, fear not." The observations made at Ps. cix. 6, render it evident that we must translate "*at*" not "*over* thy right hand." The right hand is named here also, "because, as it is the organ of action; to stand at the right hand is the most convenient position for one who is determined perseveringly to hinder or to assist." The *enemies* of Israel stood at his right hand, marring all his efforts; and *his God* stands at his right hand *promoting* these efforts. As the shade is a figurative expression for protection, there is no reason for tearing the words from each other, and translating: "*he is* at thy right hand." According to the common view יכה is supposed to be suitable only to the *sun*, and to be applied merely by a *zeugma* to the *moon*. But the word does not signify to *pierce* or to *burn*, but to *strike*, and applies to the sun only in so far as *striking* is a figurative expression for injuring; and this is equally applicable to the moon. In Gen. xxxi. 40, *to devour*, is in like manner applied figuratively to *heat* and *cold*. But how can injury be applied to the moon? There is no use for spending words upon those who suppose that "this expression was caused by the association of ideas from a regard to the parallelism." The sacred Psalmist gives us no reason to believe that he was not in possession of sound human understanding. Those persons also are as little to be attended to who suppose that the Psalmist hints at "an essential evil influence of the moon." Physical secret doctrines are here not in their place, and are nowhere to be found in the Psalms. The key is to be found in Gen. xxxi. 40, where Jacob complains: "the heat consumed me by the day, and the cold by night," comp. Jer. xxxvi. 30, where it is said of Jehoiakim, "his carcase shall be cast out during the heat by day and the cold by night." Heat and cold serve the Psalmist as figurative expressions for the conflicts to which the people are exposed, because suffering assumed this form in the case of the patriarch, and the pilgrims must have felt themselves, from their situation, peculiarly exposed to it. It cannot appear

remarkable that the cold of the night which is so perceptible in the East, is attributed to the moon. The moon, according to Genesis i. 16, "the great light to rule the day, and the lesser light to rule the night," is *the ruler of the night;* and every thing belongs to it which happens during its reign, without regard to whether that thing proceeds properly from it, and without our laying any stress upon Lampe's remark, "the cold is more intense when the moon shines, than it is during nocturnal rains."

Ver. 7, 8.—Ver. 7. *The Lord shall keep thee from all evil: he shall keep thy soul.* Ver. 8. *The Lord shall keep thy outgoing and incoming from henceforth even for ever.* The threefold repetition of the expression, "he shall keep thee," is, according to the correct observation of Calvin, a testimony to the greatness of human unbelief, which needs continually repeated assurances.[a] Luther has erroneously understood the two verses as expressive of *desire* instead of *assurance.* The *outgoing* and the *incoming* in ver. 8 denote the *commencement* of the undertakings, and their *completion* after the people had returned home. Compare the fundamental passage, Deut. xxviii. 6. In the expression "from henceforth even for ever," the old expositors, taking for granted that the Psalm applies to individuals (a view which even the expression before us is sufficient to disprove), have found a proof of personal immortality instead of the immortality of the church. The consideration that the outgoing and the incoming are applicable only to the circumstances of this life might have guarded them against this idea. The passage before us, however, does lead indirectly to this result: God's eternal protection of his church is a pledge that he will graciously take care of its individual members for ever. A firm faith in personal immortality, or, more correctly, in the eternal salvation of the individuals who have been elected, must grow out of the soil thus well prepared.

[a] He adds: this passage reminds us, if a brief sentence be not sufficient, that whatever occurs in Scripture in different passages on the subject of Providence, ought to be collected together.

PSALM CXXII.

An introduction of two verses stands instead of a *Title*, announcing the object of the Psalm. The preceding Psalm was intended to be sung in sight of Jerusalem, and this one at the gates of the city, where the pilgrim train had halted for the purpose of arranging the solemn procession to the sanctuary. The *main body* of the Psalm is complete in seven verses, and these are divided into portions of three and four. Ver. 3–5 represents the glory of Jerusalem, the beautifully built, ecclesiastical, and civil capital of the nation; and ver. 6–9 expresses *wishes and prayers for its salvation*, intimating that the salvation of Israel, and the maintenance of the beloved house of God, are intimately connected.

The title attributes the Psalm to David as its author; and internal evidence confirms this. The design of the Psalm can only be explained in connection with the times of David. Its design is to conciliate the affections of the people for the new capital; to procure for it that place in their feelings which it occupied externally. Ver. 3 takes for granted that Jerusalem had recently, for the first time, become a beautifully built city; and this was the case in David's time. At all events, the description of Jerusalem, as a city beautifully built, well compacted, adorned with palaces, and fortified, *here* and in ver. 7, points to a time before the captivity. The matter, moreover, is put beyond a doubt, by the mention of the thrones of the house of David in ver. 5, which presupposes the existence of the kingdom of David, and which it will not do to refer to poor Zerubabel, who never was a king. The use also of the name Israel for the whole people, ver. 4, shews that, at that time, the nation was an undivided whole, and the mention of the pilgrimage of all the tribes to Jerusalem, points most decidedly to a time before the division of the kingdom; as after that event Jerusalem ceased to be regarded by the ten tribes as their religious capital, and the pilgrimages consequently came to an end. It has, indeed, been attempted to evade the conclusions drawn from ver. 3–5, by the idea that the Psalmist, in these verses, merely describes what had existed in *former ages*: "the procession of travellers to

the feasts brings vividly before the mind of the Psalmist the days under the ancient kings, when the tribes of Jehovah went up, as they now do again, to Jerusalem." But ver. 7 alone is sufficient to set aside this expedient; according to it, Jerusalem was at that time a splendid strong city, and, accordingly, it will not do to refer ver. 3 to the past. Then this idea violently tears away ver. 3–5 from its connection with the introduction, and with ver. 6–9. A glory which was altogether gone was very ill adapted to call forth lively joy on entering the city. And the exhortation to pray for Jerusalem, in ver. 6 ss., is deprived of the basis on which it rests, viz., the description of the glory and national importance of Jerusalem.

The reasons which have been adduced against the Davidic origin of the Psalm are of no force. The assertion that ver. 2 is not applicable to David, but only to the pilgrims who approached the city from without, is set aside by the remark, that David here, as he frequently did (for example Ps. xx., xxi.), sung from the soul of the people. The mention of the *house of the Lord*, in ver. 1 and 9, does not lead to the time after the building of Solomon's temple, for it is undeniable, that even the early sanctuary was known by this name; comp. Ps. v. 7, xxvii., 4, lv. 14, and at Ps. xxx. 1. The assertion that pilgrimages to Jerusalem did not come into general use till some time after the reign of David, when uniformity of public worship had been completely established, depends upon the idea which is not at all borne out by history, that the directions contained in the Pentateuch, as to there being only one sanctuary, were not observed till a later age. It has been proved in the treatises on the Pentateuch, and the time of the judges, in vol. iii. of the Beitr., that, during the whole period of the judges, the people had only one sanctuary, and that to it were brought the sacrifices of the whole nation, and that the great festivals, especially the Passover, were celebrated in accordance with the directions of the law, Ex. xxiii. 15–17, xxxiv. 23; Deut. xvi. 16. That the sanctuary in Jerusalem, under David, did in reality come exactly into the place of the earlier one at Shiloh, is clear from the fact, that the ark of the covenant was there "the heart of the Israelitish religion;" and, indeed, the ark of the covenant rising, as it were, from its grave (comp. Beitr. p. 48 ss.), as intimated by the circumstance,

that, as soon as it was consecrated, sacrifices *were offered* before it, 2 Sam. vi. 5, 13. The matter finally is put beyond a doubt by the Psalms of David's age, for they speak only of *one* sanctuary, the sanctuary at Jerusalem; comp. at Ps. xv. 1. The old tabernacle, indeed, at Gibeon, still continued to exist, but only as a ruin. David did not act like the breakers of images; he respected externally the attachments of the people, but with happy effect he did every thing he could to turn the regard of the people more and more towards Jerusalem:[a] and the Psalm before us, along with others, served this object—its design being to awaken love, devout love, for Jerusalem and its sanctuary.[b] There are, besides, distinct traces of solemn processions to the sanctuary in the time of David, Ps. xlii. 4, lv. 14.—The mention of the *house* of David cannot seem strange. David had founded a *new house*, instead of the *house of Saul*, 2 Sam. iii. 1. Even before the promise which he received through Nathan, he hoped and wished that he would continue to reign in his posterity (comp. at Ps. xxi. 4, cxxxviii. 3), and after that promise he always looked upon himself as the founder of a family which was to last for ever, for example, Ps. xviii. 20.—Finally, the assertion that the language is that of a *later* age, has no further foundation to rest on than the יש occurring twice instead of אישר. This form, however, occurs in a much older song, that of Deborah; and, in the present instance, it need occasion very little difficulty, occurring, as it does, in a *popular* song, which consists of the language of ordinary life, and may be expected to contain forms which would afterwards appear in written language.

As far as concerns the time of composition, the Psalm takes for granted that Jerusalem had already become the ecclesiastical and civil capital. It cannot therefore have been composed before 2 Sam. vi.; but it must have been composed shortly after that period, as its design is to render popular the new institution, to endear to the affections of the people the city "which was the bond of sacred union."

[a] Calvin: "He knew that the safety of the church depended upon their worshipping God in purity, according to the requirements of the law, and also upon their acknowledging that seat of royalty which the same God had himself erected."

[b] Ven.: "The scope is to prepare and excite the people to receive Jerusalem as the seat of royalty and religion, to seek to promote its peace and prosperity by all means, and cheerfully to celebrate divine worship there."

Ver. 1 and 2.—*A Song of the Pilgrims by David.* Ver. 1. *I rejoice over those who say to me, "we will go to the house of the Lord."* Ver. 2. *Our feet tarry in thy gates, O Jerusalem. The* שמח with ב ver. 1, constantly occurs in the sense of *to rejoice over.* The speakers are the object of joy, because of what they say. Every one says to another, "we will go to the house of the Lord," and each one rejoices over the other saying so. Isa. ii. 3, illustrates the clause: "and many nations go and say, come let us go up to the mountain of the Lord, to the house of the God of Jacob." This passage to all appearance alludes to the one before us; what formerly the pilgrim Israelites said (this is the meaning of the allusion) the heathen nations shall in a future age say to each other. The idea that the Psalmist does not include himself among the pilgrims, but that he gives expression to his joy for the purpose of strengthening the resolution of others, is inconsistent with the expression "*to me,*" and is contrary to the general character of the pilgrim-songs, which contain nothing of a purely personal nature. That the expression "we will," is not to be considered as uttered at the *beginning of the whole pilgrimage,* but after the pilgrims had arrived at the gates of Jerusalem; that the going to the house of God here spoken of begins for the first time *there,* is evident from ver. 2, to which the remark is applicable, "the Psalmist is already in spirit in Jerusalem;" this is still farther evident, as ver. 3 shows that the city was really before the Psalmist's eyes. Solemn processions through the city to the temple occur even in Psalm lv. 14, xlii. 4; and the expression, "with joy and thanks," in the latter passage shows that during these processions songs were sung in praise of the Lord.[a]—Ver. 2 cannot be read according to some

[a] Luther: It appears as if David said nothing great when he says: "We will go into the house of the Lord." For when we think only of stones, wood, and gold, we do not properly think of the temple. But the house of the Lord rather means this, that man is in the place in which God, being present, can hear, see, and feel, while there his word and his true worship are to be found. Solomon's temple was not beautiful, because it was adorned with gold and silver; but its true beauty consisted in this, that God's word was heard there, that God was called upon there, that there God was found to be gracious, a Saviour who gave peace and forgave sin. This is what is meant by beholding the temple, not as an ox or an idiot looks at it, not as the masquerading bishops look at the temple." These words drawn deeply from the Scriptures may well be pondered by expositors as well as others who cannot comprehend how such expressions as the house or the emple of the Lord could be used before Solomon's temple was built. The Scriptures deal with such matters more intellectually and more spiritually.

with marks of quotation. It completes the description of the situation; the pilgrims were already within Jerusalem, and were just going to the house of the Lord. The participle with הָיְתָה denotes the continuance of the past stretching into the present, Ew. § 168, c., and intimates that a long stay was to be made at the gates where the people, arriving one after the other, assembled, and the procession was arranged. It was only the simple participle that could be used in expressing the present. Only there, in the immediate view of Jerusalem, was the proper place for singing the Psalm.

Ver. 3. *Jerusalem, thou builded, as a city which is bound together.* Ver. 4. *There the tribes go up, the tribes of the Lord—the ordinance of the Lord—to praise the name of the Lord.* Ver. 5. *For the judgment seats, the thrones are established there, the thrones of the house of David.*—The whole of ver. 3 is to be considered as an expression of wonder; for the article הַבְּנוּיָה renders it manifest that we cannot with Luther translate, "Jerusalem is built." It is clear as day that we cannot translate with Gesenius and others, "thou who hast been *rebuilt*." For to *build* is only used of restoration in those cases where a *destruction* had been formerly mentioned; and of this there is no trace in the passage before us, and Jerusalem is, according to ver. 7, a fortified city of palaces. We may either take the building in the ordinary sense—in this case the expression must be immediately connected with what follows—or in an emphatic sense, for "thou well-built," (a bad city is as good as not built); thus Nebuchadnezzar, in Dan. iv. 27, says of Babylon, a city which had stood for a hundred years: is not this the great city Babylon which *I have built;* it is also said of David, 2 Sam. v. 11, "I have *built* Jerusalem." The circumstance is decisive in favour of the latter view, that by it we obtain two parallel clauses, in harmony with all the other verses. That the expression "like a city which is bound together (the כ denotes Jerusalem as corresponding to the idea of such a city) is not to be referred to the union effected by David between the two divisions of the city which had hitherto existed apart, the fortress and the lower city, but to the magnificent architecture, is evident from the expression "*in* thy palaces." The first fact besides is altogether doubtful; the passage, 2 Sam. v. 9, "And David built the city round about from Millo (a part

of Zion) inwards," next to the city properly so called (comp. Thenius on the passage) does not refer to the union, but to the planting of the city with splendid houses. Some expositors have, without the least reason, considered the verse before us as expressive of the astonishment of the rustics and villagers when they came from the country to the capital for the first time, and compared it with its magnificent closely connected rows of houses, to the irregularly built country villages, interspered with gardens and other spaces. This would be very childish. The object of astonishment is rather that the place which in former days, and up to a very recent period, had been so unsightly, should in such a short time have become a stately city. David leads on the pilgrims and all Israel to see in this a proof of the favour of God resting upon Jerusalem, and a seal of its election. A conclusion altogether similar to the one before us occurs in 2 Sam. v. 12, where, after the narrative of the building of the royal fortress by David, we read, "and David knew (Thenius: he was convinced of it by the prosperous completion of the royal-fabric) that the Lord had established him as king over Israel, and that he had exalted his kingdom, because of his people Israel," comp. also 2 Sam. v. 10, with ver. 9. Exactly in the same way as is done with the first basis here, the *preservation* of the magnificently-built Jerusalem is considered in Ps. xlviii. 12–14, as a proof of the favour of God resting upon that city.—From the external splendour of Jerusalem the Psalmist proceeds in ver. 4 to its internal glory: he praises its rank as that of the religious metropolis of the nation, the centre of the congregation of God. The additional expression, "the tribes of the Lord," serves to exalt the dignity of the place of meeting. Luther: "he does not say simply the tribes, but he adds to this, viz., the tribes of the Lord, whom the Lord himself has chosen, that they might be his people before all other nations on the earth whose God he will be." The short interjected clause, "a testimony for Israel," instead of "agreeably to the precept given to Israel," serves the same object. The עדות is frequently used of the whole revelation as given to Moses, comp. at Ps. xix. 7, lxxviii. 5, in the passage before us in the same way, as in Ps. lxxxi. 5; the precept is meant which required all the males to appear three times a-year in the place of the sanctuary, Ex. xxiii. 17, xxxiv. 3, Deut. xvi. 16. For the dignity of the place

was great in proportion to the sacredness of the custom. In reference to the *name of the Lord* (Lampe: "the excellency of his attributes which he has revealed") compare at Ps. liv. 6.—Much ingenuity has been expended upon the "for" in ver. 6. It intimates that Jerusalem owed its elevation to be the *religious metropolis* of the nation to its antecedent rank as the *civil capital*. At bottom there lies the view that both were inseparably connected; and indeed, in consequence of the intimate union between church and state, the separation would have brought great evils in its train. The law had been already laid down in Deut. xvii. 8, 9, that the supreme tribunal should be in the place of the sanctuary. Jerusalem was first raised to be the civil metropolis, it was the city of David, 2 Sam. v. 9, vi. 16; afterwards, and as the consequence of this, after David had learned from his divine victories that it was agreeable to the will of God, it became the *city of God*, 2 Sam. vi. As the שׁמה always means "from that place" (comp. Ps. lxxvi. 3), it is a concise form of speech, to be understood as: they have established themselves from that place, and they sit there. The sitting will not suit the thrones. The idea adopted by several is inadmissible, that it is used instead of "*standing*," and the idea is equally inadmissible that the words should be translated "they sit upon thrones," for the impersonal nomin. will not suit, and the ישׁב is never construed with the accusative; ישׁב הכּרבים is *the sitter of the cherubim*. The simplest idea is that the thrones for judgment, like our *bench* of judges, stands for the judicial power. *Sitting* is usually applied to this. As thrones in the plural are mentioned, we cannot think merely of the royal throne. All thrones, however, belonged to the house of David; for it was under the auspices of that house that all judicial sentences were pronounced. The twelve thrones on which, according to Matth. xix. 28, the twelve apostles sit judging the twelve tribes of Israel, correspond. Compare also Is. xxxii. 1.

On the basis of the description of the glory and dignity of Jerusalem, there rises the mutual exhortation of the pilgrims to pray for it, and the prayer itself. Ver. 6. *Pray for the peace of Jerusalem, may those be at peace who love her.* Ver. 7. *Peace be in thy bulwarks, quiet in thy palaces.* Ver. 8. *For my brethren and friends' sakes, I will say: peace be in thee.* Ver. 9. *For*

the sake of the house of the Lord our God I will seek thy good. In ver. 6 several expositors translate, "enquire after the peace of Jerusalem." This is contrary to the usage of the language (in this case לשלום would have been the word, Gen. xliii. 27, and especially Jer. xv. 5), contrary to what immediately *follows*, which does not contain any information but intercessory *prayer*, contrary to the corresponding expression, "I will seek thy good" in ver. 9, and finally with scarcely a tolerable sense. Allusion is made to the meaning of the name of Jerusalem, which is compounded of ירוש and שלם, *a peaceful possession*, compare Ps. lxxvi. 2, where a similar allusion takes place. Besides, every effort is made in this and the following verse to produce alliterations on this name, a name so dear to David, and which he is anxious to render dear to the people, inasmuch as he connects with it the brightest possible ideas.[a] In the second clause and in ver. 7 there follow the wish and the prayer which had called for in the first clause. That in the expression: may they be at rest who love thee, we are to suppose added "by means of the quiet which is afforded *to thee*," is evident from the relation to the first clause and from ver. 7, and also from ver. 8, where the peace of *Jerusalem* appears as the condition of the peace of all Israel. Those who love Jerusalem are all true Israelites, for the mark of a true Israelite is love to the place of the sanctuary, the metropolis of the church.—The *bulwarks* and the *palaces* stand opposed to each as descriptive of the external circumference and the interior condition, exactly as in ver. 7, and in Ps. xlviii. 13. —In ver. 8 and 9, intercession for Jerusalem is traced up to its source: it flows from *love of the brethren and of God.* For the well-being of the whole nation depends upon her well-being; and in her is the house of God. The *brethren* and the *friends* of the pilgrims are not the inhabitants of Jerusalem alone, but all the members of the people of the covenant. For Jerusalem belonged to them all; it was the beating heart in the body of the congregation.[b] Her peace was, at the same time, the peace of the whole

[a] Ven.: The perpetual alliteration of the words with each other, and of all of them with the name of Jerusalem, produces an elegant effect."

[b] Calvin: "Lest any one should shrewdly object that David is in this way only establishing his own kingdom, he solemnly declares that he is not influenced by any private regard for himself, but that he embraces in his bosom the whole church."

people; comp. Jer. xxix. 7, "And seek the peace of the city to which I have led you away captive, and pray for it to the Lord, *for by its peace shall be your peace*," when, by a kind of parody, in altered circumstances, what is here said of Zion is applied to Babylon. The common translation is, "I will wish peace to you." But that we must rather translate, "I will say, Peace be in thee," (comp. Luke x. 5), appears from the doubled ב in ver. 7, according to which the ב is here also a ב of place. Even "to speak peace" never occurs in the sense of "to pray," or "to wish for peace;" and the בך, according to this view, can only mean "from thee," which will not suit.—In ver. 9, the conclusion turns back to the point with which the Psalm opened, the house of God.[a] The seeking of good to Jerusalem (comp. Deut. xxiii. 6), the striving and endeavouring to promote it (comp. at Ps. xxvii. 4) is seen in the first instance, and chiefly in the intercession for it thereby occasioned. For our own strength can do nothing here; and the preceding verses had spoken of nothing but prayer.

PSALM CXXIII.

The Psalm falls into two strophes, each of two verses, expressions of desire after God and his aid, ver. 1 and 2, prayer for this after the description of the distress forming the basis on which the prayer rests, ver. 3 and 4. A characteristic feature of the Pilgrim Songs is, that *petition* throughout occupies a very small space (here the mere "have mercy on us"), and that *meditation* everywhere prevails. *Prayer-songs*, properly so called, would have been too far removed from the character of popular songs. Prayer-songs are only suitable to the sanctuary.

The Psalm is entirely suitable to the circumstances more fully narrated in Ps. cxx.[b] We are led to these circumstances by the consideration that the Psalm was not composed in a state of *danger*, but in a condition of misery and wretchedness, which, by its con-

a Calvin: "There is added a second reason, because, unless Jerusalem continue to stand, the worship of God will not remain entire, but will be destroyed. Therefore, if the safety of our brethren be precious to us, if religion lie near our hearts, the safety of the church, as far as it is within our power, must be attended to."

b The title in the Syriac translation is: It is spoken in the person of Zerubbabel, prince of the captives; and is a supplicatory address.

trast with the pretensions of being the people of God, gave occasion to the contempt and mockery of the enemies. The whole surrounding heathen nations are to be considered as the authors of this contempt, but especially the *Samaritans* favoured by the Persian government, of whom it is said in Neh. ii. 19, as in ver. 4, "they laughed us to scorn and despised us" (comp. also ch. i. 3), so that the assertion of De Wette, that the Psalm does not suit the hostility of the Samaritans, as the Jews suffered from them hindrance and annoyance, but not contempt, is altogether without foundation.—The striking agreement of the beginning with Ps. cxxi. 1 points to the identity of the author.

The Psalm begins in the singular (*I direct*), but the plural, which immediately follows, shows that it is not an individual that speaks, but, in accordance with the common style of the Pilgrim Songs, the congregation of the Lord.

Calvin, in appropriate language, shows the application of the Psalm to the church of all ages: "The Holy Ghost, by a clear voice, incites us to come to God as often as not one and another member only, but the whole church, is unjustly and haughtily oppressed by the passions of her enemies.

Ver. 1–2.—*A Song of the Pilgrims.*—Ver. 1. *To thee I direct my eyes, O Thou who sittest in heaven.* Ver. 2. *Behold as the eyes of servants look to the hands of their lords, as the eyes of the handmaid look to the hand of her mistress, thus our eyes look to the Lord our God, till he be gracious to us.—Thou who dwellest in heaven*, ver. 1,—far exalted above the earth and all its potentates, omnipotent, infinitely rich in aid for thy people; comp. Ps. cxv. 3, "Our God is in heaven, he does whatever he will," and the parallel passages quoted there. On the parag. Jod, at Ps. ciii. 3.[a]—That the אדנים in ver. 2, does not denote, as it sometimes does in other passages, individual lords (the plural is instead of

[a] Luther: This is a strong sigh of a pained heart, which looks round on all sides, and seeks friends, protectors, and comforters, but can find none. Therefore it says, Where shall I, a poor, despised man, find refuge? I am not so strong as to be able to preserve myself, wisdom and plans fail me among the multitude of adversaries who assault me; therefore, I come to thee, O my God, to thee I lift up my eyes, O thou that dwellest in heaven.—He places over against each other the Inhabitant of heaven and the inhabitants of earth, and reminds himself that, though the world be high and powerful, God is higher still. What shouldest thou do then, when the world despises and insults thee? Turn thine eyes thither, and see that God, with his beloved angels and his elect, looks down upon thee, rejoices in thee, and loves thee."

abstract dominion), is clear from the mention of the servants as distinct from the handmaid; it occurs in the sense of masters also in Jerem. xxvii. 4. The hand of the masters and of the mistress can only mean the *punishing* hand; and the eyes are directed to it in the attitude of entreaty and supplication that the punishment may soon come to an end, and pity be shown to the miserable. This is evident, 1, from the passage from which this figurative expression originated. This is, Gen. ch. xvi., comp. ver. 6: "And Abraham said to Sarai, *Behold thine handmaid is in thine hand*, do to her what seemeth good to thee, and Sarai evil-entreated her, and she fled from her. . . . Ver. 8. . . . I flee from Sarai *my mistress*. Ver. 9. And the angel of the Lord said to her, Return to thy mistress, and humble thyself *under her hands*." 2. From the expression her mistress. If the language referred to friendly gifts and grants, the term used would not denote a *severe mistress*. From the expression, "till he be gracious to us." This clause leads us to regard the *masters and the mistress as not gracious*. Now the hand of ungracious dominion can only be a punishing hand. From such a hand it is not gifts, but only an amelioration of punishment, that may be expected. These reasons are decisive against the idea of several expositors that the hand is the hand bestowing gifts, as it is at Ps. cxlv. 15, 16, civ. 27, 28. The same remark applies to the view taken by Calvin and others, who explain the looking to the hand as a seeking of protection; the mention of the relation of the handmaid to the mistress is also against this. The passage paints in a striking manner the right position of those who sigh under the judgments of God. They do not rage and murmur, because they know that they suffer what they deserve; but they humble themselves, according to the exhortation of the angel to Hagar, under the hand which afflicts them, and only entreat that they may receive favour instead of justice.

Ver. 3–4.—Ver. 3. *Be gracious to us, O Lord, be gracious to us, for we are very much filled with contempt.* Ver. 4. *Our soul was exceedingly filled with the contempt of those at ease, the scorning of the proud.*—On the רבת, in ver. 4, comp. Ps. cxx. 6. The irregularity, that the לעג is marked in a double manner by the art. and the stat. constr. (comp. Ew. § 290), is relieved as soon as we conceive of a comma being placed after it: the con-

tempt of the secure. At the גאיונים it is avoided by the insertion of the ל which limits the stat. constr. The reading in the text is to be pointed בַּגַּאֲיוֹנָם. The Masorites who suspected the uncommon form divided the word, and read גאי יונים, *the proud ones of the oppressors.*[a]

PSALM CXXIV.

The church of the Lord acknowledges that she is protected against imminent destruction singly and alone by his help, ver. 1–5. She praises the Lord for this his grace, and, on the ground of it, joyfully acknowledges him as the only object of her trust, ver. 6–8.

The Psalm consists of an introductory verse which, at the very beginning, gives marked prominence to the main thought, the "if not;" and a main body of seven verses, divided by the three and the four.

The title ascribes the Psalm to David. A situation similar to that described here, that of threatened destruction, assuredly occurred in the time of David, during the Aramaic-Edomitic war; comp. Ps. xliv., lx. Yet David has taken occasion, from this distress, to compose a song which should be useful to the church of all ages in similar circumstances. This is obvious from the want of all special allusions.

On behalf of the Davidic origin of the Psalm, attested in the title, and denied by modern expositors without any satisfactory reason, we may urge, that the Psalm is not marked by the mild softness of the Psalms which were composed after the captivity, but has in it as much of David's impetuosity as could exist in a popular song. To this we may add the striking agreement, in particular expressions, with passages of David's Psalms.

Luther: "We may well sing this Psalm, not only against our enemies which openly hate and persecute us, but also against spiritual wickedness. For we know, from the teaching of the

a Calvin: But because we see that the church of God, long ago, has been covered with reproach, and pointed at by the finger of scorn, there is no reason why the contempt of the world should terrify us, or why the wicked should weaken our faith, while they attack us with their words, nay, cut us with their reproaches.

gospel, that now seven devils beset us, whereas formerly we had only one to fear. But this is not the whole of our danger; a third enemy must rise up against us, within ourselves, whom we carry along with us and tenderly preserve, namely, the sacred venerable woman, our flesh, which incites us to sin at all times and makes disturbance, is contrary to faith, and fights against the spirit in all our members."

A Song of the Pilgrimages.—By David. Ver. 1. *Had not the Lord remained with us, thus may Israel say.*—There occurs here and in the 2d verse an *aposiopesis:* it would have happened so and so; exactly as in Ps. xxvii. 13, "had I not believed to see the goodness of the Lord in the land of the living" . . . comp. at the passage. The שׁ is not superfluous, but it is to be explained, "if he had not been who still was ours = whom we still have, comp. at Ps. lvi. 9.

Ver. 2–5.—Ver. 2. *Had not the Lord remained with us! when men rose up against us.* Ver. 3. *Then they had swallowed us up alive, when their wrath burned against us.* Ver. 4. *Then the water had overflowed us, a stream had gone over our soul.* Ver. 5. *Then the proud waters had gone over our soul. Men*, ver. 2,—who, however numerous they may be, are yet to be considered as nothing before the Almighty; comp. Ps. lvi. 11, "In God I trust, I fear not what men shall do to me."—On אָזַי, ver. 3, the ancient and poetic form which occurs only in the passage before us, instead of אָז, comp. Ew. § 603. Against unnecessarily changing the sense, this full form and the emphatic threefold repetition are decisive. The "alive" is to be explained here as in Ps. lv. 15, Prov. i. 12, only from the allusion to the destruction of the company of Korah, Num. xvi. 32, 33, where both words, the "swallowing up," and the "alive," occur; the import therefore is, they would have swallowed us up, as formerly the devouring vengeance of Sheol swallowed up alive the wicked of a former age.—The *overflowing waters*, ver. 4, occur also in the strikingly similar Davidic passages, Ps. xviii. 16, cxliv. 7, as an emblem of *enemies*. On the "stream" (the נַחַלָה, the full form like אָזַי), comp. Ps. xviii. 4.—The *proud* waters, ver. 5, are here all the more suitable, as it had been *spiritual* waters that had been spoken of. There is no reason whatever for having

recourse to the doubtful sense of boiling and boiling over; comp. at Ps. lxxxix. 9.

Ver. 6–8.—Ver. 6. *Praised be the Lord that he has not given us over for a prey to their teeth.* Ver. 7. *Our soul has escaped like a bird from the snare of the fowler, the snare is broken and we are free.* Ver. 8. *Our help is in the name of the Lord, the Creator of heaven and earth.*[a]—On ver. 6 comp. the Davidic passage, Ps. xxviii. 6, "Praised be the Lord, for he has heard the voice of my supplications," and Ps. xxxi. 22, "praised be the Lord, for he has shewn me wonderful goodness in a strong city." —On ver. 8, Calvin: "he now extends to the perpetual state of the church what the faithful had formerly experienced." Ps. xxxiii. 22 is parallel. The name of the Lord is the Lord in the richness of his deeds. On the second clause comp. Ps cxxi. 2.[b]

PSALM CXXV.

The protecting grace of God over his own people is illustrated by two images drawn from the natural situation of the metropolis of the church—the people of the Lord is firm like Mount Zion, is surrounded by the protection of the Lord, as Jerusalem is surrounded by mountains—and the objection drawn from the circumstances of the times, the dominion of the heathen, under which the people of God groaned, is set aside by referring to a *better* future, ver. 1–3. Upon the ground of the confidence described in the first part, there rises in the second, the *prayer* that the Lord would do good to the true Israel; and to this there is added the solemn exclusion of the false seed from this future salvation, which, in the concluding words, is yet once more supplicated on behalf of Israel, ver. 4, 5.

The formal arrangement becomes obvious only when we consider ver. 1 as the ruling fortress in relation to this and the fol-

[a] Calvin: He now exhorts the pious to gratitude, and, as it were, dictates words to them.

[b] Luther: "He thus places over against the great danger and conflict omnipotent God, and drowns, as it were, in an anthem, the wickedness of the whole world and of hell, just as a great fire consumes a little drop of water."

lowing Psalm, which is bound up with it, so that the two form one pair; and this relation of the first verse to the two Psalms, is all the more necessary, as, in accordance with the common arrangement, the two figures in verses 1 and 2 strike too closely upon each other. We thus obtain, for the main body in our Psalm, four verses in accordance with the four repetitions of the word Jehovah,—four as the signature of what is complete on every side, thus pointing, according to the contents, to the protection of God on every side; comp. the clause, "the Lord is *round* about his people," in ver. 2. The four verses fall into two strophes, each of the same length. The four of this Psalm, and the six of the following, which in common with it has the word Jehovah four times, make up the number ten; the two strophes of that Psalm, when added to the two here, give again the number four. The two Psalms before us are bound up with the Davidic Psalm cxxiv., so that the three form one trilogy. They are all intimately connected together as to their contents. The two latter Psalms are as it were the response which was drawn forth by David's powerful call from the heart of the congregration of God after the captivity.

The main tendency of the Psalm, as is that of Ps. cxxiv. and cxxvi., is to *strengthen* and to *comfort*; next to this, however, to *warn*.[a] Definite historical relations meet us. The church first sang the Psalm under the oppression of heathen rule, ver. 3, but in her own land; from the natural features of that land the figures of her security and of the divine protection were taken. Struggling with manifold troubles which might have led her to doubt as to the protecting favour of God, she here rises above these in faith; possessing a good kernel, ver. 4, but at the same time a bad shell, ver. 5; numbering not a few externally among her members who through the necessities of the times had wandered from God, and departed from the path of his revealed will.

These circumstances are exactly those which existed after the deliverance from captivity at the time when the building of the temple was interrupted, comp. at Ps. cxx. cxxvi. To what an extent at that time, in consequence especially of disappointed hopes, corruption again sprang up among the Israelites, is seen

[a] Calvin: In the meantime, however, least hypocrites should promiscuously apply to themselves what is here said, he discriminates between the true and the false Israelites.

from the prophecies of Zechariah, of which the Psalm before us may well be considered as a compend in comfort and in threatening; Zechariah, in consequence of these sinners, had occasion given him to announce new serious threatenings of judgment, comp. ch. v. and xi., Christol. ii. 12, 59.

In accordance with the title in which the Psalm is termed *a pilgrim song*, stand the two figures which impress a high sacredness upon the view of Zion and Jerusalem as obtained by the pilgrims, and are intended to open up to them the symbolical import of natural objects.

A Song of the Pilgrimages.—Ver. 1. *Those who trust in the Lord are as Mount Zion, which moves not, stands for ever.*—The Psalmists labour with great earnestness to find supports for faith in the visible world, which fights so powerfully against it. It is thus that Mount Zion is in the passage before us consecrated to this object; whoever looks at it in its immoveable firmness, will thereby be led to lay to heart the immoveable firmness of the *church*. As the point of comparison, according to the express interpretation of the Psalmist, is what is *common* to Zion with other mountains, its immoveable firmness, any other mountain might have been named. The reason why the Psalmist was led to choose Mount Zion, is, that it was the external seat of the church. He compares the firmness of the church itself to that of her external seat, the immoveableness of the spiritual to that of the material Zion. The figure is destroyed by those ancient and modern expositors who understand by Mount Zion itself something spiritual, the church. The church is rather indicated by "those who trust in the Lord;" and their firmness is *likened* to that of external Zion. In the expression, "those who trust in the Lord," the emphasis is not laid on the *affection* of trust, but on the *object* of the trust, and the meaning is, "those who are protected by the Lord," "the people of the Lord." The *sitting*, like our *standing*, is in opposition to *lying on the ground;* this is the sense in all those passages where expositors translate the word by "to be inhabitated," or "habitable." A sitting city, a sitting country, a sitting house, is one standing upright, not laid on the ground. It is thus that the word here is used of a mountain, which stands in immoveable firmness. That we cannot have recourse with Ewald to the arbitrary sense of "to be inhabitated,"

is evident, apart from other considerations, from the fact that "to sit for ever," is marked out by the want of the copula as the *negative* to which "not to move" is merely the corresponding *positive*. On "moves not," comp. Ps. xlvi. 5, where it is said of the city of God, "God is in the midst of her, she shall not move." Luther has incorrectly referred the not moving and the sitting to those who trust:—they shall not fall, but shall abide for ever, like Mount Sion. Besides the singular the word "to sit" is against this.

Ver. 2. *The mountains are round about Jerusalem; and the Lord is round about his people from henceforth even for ever.* Ver. 3. *For the sceptre of wickedness shall not rest upon the lot of the righteous, so that the righteous put not forth the hand to unrighteousness.*—On ver. 2, we may comp. the remarks of Robinson on the situation of Jerusalem: "The sacred city lies upon the broad and high mountain range, which is shut in by the two valleys, Jehosaphat and Hinnom. *All the surrounding hills are higher:* in the east the Mount of Olives, on the south, the so called hill of evil counsel, which ascends from the valley of Hinnom. On the west, the ground rises gently to the border of the great Wady as described above, while in the north the bend of a ridge which adjoins the Mount of Olives, limits the view to a distance of about a mile and a half." This outward situation of Jerusalem, the Psalmist views with the eye of a *theologian*, who always lays to heart the thought of the distresses, the conflicts, and the victories of the church, and sees everywhere in external things images of these, for example, in those loud roaring and powerlessly changing waves of the sea, the figure of worldly power in hostility to the church. Led on by him, the faithful, when they looked at the mountains round about Jerusalem, the external seat of the church, saw in them the spiritual mountains of God's protection. Zech. ii. 4, 5 is parallel.[a] The idea of the *people of God* must here be defined from what precedes and follows. It is

[a] Luther: "It is much easier to learn than to believe that we who have by us the word of God and believe in it, are surrounded with Divine aid. If we were surrounded by walls of steel and fire, we would feel secure and defy the devil. But the property of faith is not to be proud of what the eye sees, but of what the word reveals. The only thing that is wanting, therefore, is, that we have no spiritual eyes, and that we follow our carnal eyes only." Berleb.: "This is the best and the most impregnable place of defence; in it thou mayest remain, however long the enemy may lie before it, if thou dost not surrender thyself."

not the whole of Israel according to the flesh, for the wicked were expressly *excluded* in ver. 5, but it is those who trust in the Lord, ver. 1, the righteous, ver. 3, the upright and good, ver. 4, therefore the Israelites without guile. The others are, according to the declaration of the law, "rooted out from among the people." The genuine and righteous separation, between the visible and the invisible church, belonged even to the Old Testament. Impure portions are mingled with the people of God according to outward appearance, which do not really belong to the body, and are not animated by the living principle. These have no part in the promises of the true church.—The Psalmist confirms in ver. 3 the affirmation made in the preceding verse, by removing an apparent objection which might be taken from the cross of the righteous, the sufferings which undeniably visit the people of God, and under which they are at present groaning. These sufferings are not *permanent*. From the oppression of the world the church shall again rise to the glorious liberty of the children of God. The length of the verse shews that the Psalmist here comes to the great question of the day. That the שבט does not here mean the rod of punishment, but the *sceptre*, the symbol of dominion (comp. at Ps. ii. 9, xlv. 6), is clear from the parallel expression for the dominion of the heathen, *the throne of wickedness*, in Ps. xciv. 20. There is also mention made of the *lot*, *i e.*, the possession; the rod of punishment descends upon the persons. The righteous (compare at Ps. xxxiii. 1) are not a particular part of the people, but the whole nation, with the exception of those who are only Israelites in appearance.[a] The ground which the Psalmist adduces for the divine procedure promised to him is, that God spares the weakness of those who believe, because they might easily, if he were to give constant prosperity to the ungodly world, and constant misery to them, depart from him and be led into apostacy, and might participate in the wickedness of the wicked, saying, "I have in vain purified my heart, and washed my hands in innocency; for I have been plagued continually, and my chastisement has been every morning," Ps. lxxiii. 13, 14. The שלח יד with ב is *to lay the hand on any one or on any thing*, Gen. xxxvii. 22, Ex. xxii. 7, 10.

a Berleb.: "The power of sin shall not always be so great in those who repent and struggle against it."

At עוֹלתה we cannot think of *revenge taken at their own hands*, to which the Israelites in present circumstances had nothing to tempt them; the word refers, as is manifest from the opposition of goodness and righteousness, in ver. 4, to wickedness in its widest extent.[a]

Ver. 4, 5.—Ver. 4. *Do good, O God, to the good, and to those who are upright in heart.* Ver. 5. *But those who turn aside to their crooked ways the Lord will let them go with evil doers, but may peace be upon Israel.*—The prayer in ver. 4 goes forth out of the basis of the *confidence*, which had been expressed in the first part, and there stands in the background, "the Lord *shall* do good." It is thus that the future in ver. 5 is connected with the imperative. The טוֹב is connected with its verb, in order to point out the intimate connection between the being and the treatment. On יְשָׁרִים, *righteous, i.e., to act righteously*, compare at Ps. xxv. 8, xxxiii. 1. The conduct, in conformity to the rule as it was laid down to Israel in the divine *law*, is here represented as necessary not only in reference to *outward actions*, but also in reference to the *heart*, comp. Ps. vii. 11. The law demanded from the Israelites the unqualified love of God and of their neighbour, and proclaimed to them, "thou shalt not *covet*." Those who in the passage before us appear under the name of the good and the upright in heart, are in ver. 5 named Israel; just as in Ps. lxxiii. 1 Israel is identified with those who are of a pure heart. It is here very manifest how unjustly the Psalmists have been charged with looking upon things in a national point of view, how very far removed they are from the Jewish delusion, that the mere fact of outward descent and of circumcision, gives any preference over

[a] Luther: "Whether the conflict be inward in the spirit, or outward in the flesh, yet the victory shall in the end be ours through Christ, as this very consolatory verse promises. This promise, however, is to both parties incredible, both to us who suffer and to those who persecute us. For what can be so false as it is, if thou askest counsel at thine own understanding. The contrary is the case. Look at Christ, he is not so forsaken on the cross as that the rod and the sceptre of the ungodly are upon him. Thus it has been also with the prophets, apostles, and other martyrs. If we will look now with our eyes we will see many things otherwise than the words represent them to be. Therefore the Holy Ghost brings us to his word and thoughts, and bids us reflect not upon what we suffer and see on earth, but upon what he is purposing in heaven. . . But we must carefully attend to this, that we do not name to God any time for deliverance. God may try us even to the very uttermost. When matters have reached the last extremity, so that nothing is before our eyes but pure despair, then he delivers us, and gives life in death, and makes us blessed in the curse."

the heathen,—a delusion which in other forms has been renewed even in the Christian church. The *Scriptures* every where look upon the *heart.*—The הטה in ver. 5 means properly to *cause to turn away the feet* or *the steps*, to *turn aside.* Thus, Is. xxx. 11, Job xxiii. 11. The עקלקלות is the acc., as it stands with verbs of motion. It occurs only in Jud. v. 6, with the ארחות left out in this passage, and denotes there *crooked ways*, in opposition to the straight running main roads, *bye-paths*, or *private roads.* A walk according to the commandments of God is compared to the public roads, and a walk according to the lusts of the unrenewed heart to the bye-ways, comp. Deut. ix. 16, "Ye make haste to depart from the way which the Lord hath commanded you," Mal. ii. 8, 9.[a] "He will let them go with" is equivalent to he will let it *happen* to them as to the evil-doers. They have associated themselves in *conduct* with evil-doers; God therefore will associate them in punishment with them, in spite of their freedom from external idolatry, and in spite of their external religion, on the ground of which so many, after the captivity, expected, with unrenewed hearts, to share in the promises of God, and wondered and murmured when their hopes were not gratified. The *evil-doers* are not the *heathen*, neither are they the *public* apostates, in opposition to those who *secretly* apostatised, but they are *the whole class*, from which the *individuals* who really belong to it sought in vain to separate themselves, in reference to God's dealings, and to prepare for themselves a different lot; comp. at Ps. xxvi. 9, xxviii. 3. The *Israel* on whose behalf peace is prayed for at the conclusion, as also in Ps. cxxviii., appearing in consequence of the removal of the sceptre of wickedness, ver. 3, are the pure *gold* of Israel, which remains after the removal of the dross, to be separated by judgment; comp. Is. lvii. 19, "Peace, peace, saith the Lord, to them that are far off, and to them that are near, and I heal," with ver. 21, "There is no peace, saith my God, to the wicked."

a Lampe: "These are emphatically termed *their* obliquities, because they proceed from the wickedness of their own hearts."

PSALM CXXVI.

The congregation of the Lord acknowledges with thanksgiving the great things which he has already done to her, how he has, by her deliverance, filled her with triumphant joy, ver. 1–3. She *entreats* him that he would not allow his work so gloriously begun to be interrupted, and also further that he would have pity upon her misery, and expresses the firm hope that her pain shall be turned into joy, ver. 4–6.

The Psalm exactly suits the situation which lies at the bottom of all the Pilgrim Songs which have no name:—comp. the introduction to Ps. cxxv. in regard to its relation to that Psalm. The great deliverance which the church has recently experienced, according to ver. 1–3, can scarcely be sought in any thing else than in the *restoration from captivity*, even although the definite reference to it, which many expositors find in ver. 1, rests upon a manifestly false exposition, and although it is only by a similar exposition that ver. 4 contains a prayer for the completion of the restoration. Ver. 4–6 refer to the mournful circumstances which existed in the *new colony* before the completion of the building of the temple. The special references are, as is usual, only slightly indicated. The sacred Psalmists were deeply impressed with the conviction that they sang for the church of all ages. The Psalm always finds a new application in those circumstances of the church in which joyful hopes, awakened by a previous deliverance, are in danger of being frustrated; it was also composed for the sake of expressing the feelings of the *individual believer*, in whom sin threatens, after his first love, to become again powerful. It guides us to prepare, out of the lively realization of the grace *already received*, a sure foundation for prayer and hope in reference to grace yet to be bestowed.

A Song of the Pilgrimages.—Ver. 1–3.—Ver. 1. *When the Lord turned himself to the turning of Sion we were like men in a dream.* Ver. 2. *Then was our mouth full of laughter, and our tongue full of joy; then they said among the heathen: the Lord has done great things for them.* Ver. 3. *The Lord has done great things for us; we were glad.*—After the example of Abenesra and Kimchi, Luther refers the whole strophe

to the *future* deliverance: "if the Lord . . . shall deliver, we shall be." But as the futures in ver. 2 are surrounded by preterites at the beginning and end, we must translate them also of the *present*. On שׁוּב with the accus., *to turn back*, comp. at Ps. xiv. 7, lxxxv. 4, Is. lii. 8, "They see eye to eye, as the Lord turneth back to Sion." The שִׁיבָה which only occurs in the passage before us (comp. in reference to the form Ew. § 146 c.) is the same in point of import with שׁוּבָה, Is. xxx. 15, "By returning and rest ye shall be established," returning in a spiritual sense, conversion. Allusion is made in a marked manner to the phrase, which frequently occurs, and which is used immediately after in ver. 4, שׁב שׁבוּת, which, as was shewn at Ps. xiv. 7, never means anything else than *to turn back to the captivity* or *to the misery of his people*. The expression is intended to intimate that the Lord returns to his people *then*, when they return to him. He returns as it were to the return of his people, as we read in the fundamental passage, Deut. xxx. 2, 3, "When thou returnest to the Lord thy God, . . . the Lord thy God returns to thy captivity, and turns thee back, and assembles thee out of all the nations whither the Lord thy God has scattered thee," and in ver. 9 and 10, "For the Lord shall return to thee to rejoice over thee, . . . when thou shalt return to the Lord thy God with thy whole soul." Prominence is also given frequently in other passages to the intimate connection between the return to the Lord and his favour, comp. Deut. iv. 30, Is. x. 21, 22, lix. 20, Neh. i. 8. There is, therefore, no reason to maintain with several expositors that שִׁיבָה is of the same import as שְׁבוּת (the circumstance that the two roots, שׁבה and שׁוּב are never interchanged is decisive against this) still less to change the שִׁיבַת into שְׁבוּת. In the שִׁיבַת there was contained, at the same time, the theological view as to the former suffering. "We were like men in a dream" is commonly explained: the happiness experienced by us was so great that we, not trusting our own eyes, regarded the reality as a dream. But the expression is not we "*believed* that we dreamed," but "we were *like* men in a dream," and thus the words can only refer to the excess of joy in which the delivered captives were out of themselves, out of their senses, and like men intoxicated or dreaming. This view also suits the connection better. The whole of the first strophe is occupied

with the representation of the former joy. The *pain* at present endured forms the counterpart to this joy in the second strophe, the removal of which is entreated from God and hoped for.[a]—The use of the future in ver. 2 cannot lead us to refer what is there said to a future time, as a special reason for that use occurs in the reference to the passage, Job viii. 21, "He shall yet fill thy mouth with laughter and thy lips with joy,"—a reference which is all the more obvious, as Job is manifestly not only the representative of individual suffering righteous men, but at the same also the *type of the church*, so that the promise imparted to him was very appropriately fulfilled in her. The second half of the verse, as well as the first, has an old basis to rest on. The peculiar expression, הגדיל יהוה לעשות, is literally from Joel ii. 21. It points to the promise of *deliverance* from trouble which had been given long before to the people when the trouble approached. This reference to an important fundamental passage, explains the *repetition* of the words. The enemies appear in this under the image of swarms of grasshoppers. The Psalmist sees through this transparent covering.

In the second strophe, ver. 4–6, we have first the *prayer* in ver. 4, and after that the *hope* in ver. 5 and 6.—Ver. 4. *Turn back, O Lord, to our captivity, as the streams in the south.* Ver. 5. *Those who sow in tears shall reap in joy.* Ver. 6. *They go and go in weeping, bearing the seed-draught, they come and come in joy, bearing their sheaves.*—The explanation of the phrase שב שבות, ver. 4, which alone is the correct one, not "to turn back the captives or the captivity," but "to return to the captivity, the miserable condition" (comp. at ver. 1), procures immediately for the second clause the proper explanation: *as streams (return) in the south.* נגב is the dry south division of Canaan, without any fountains, Jos. xv. 19, and thus all the more dependant upon the rain-streams, the disappearance of which filled every place with sadness; comp., in reference to these rain-streams, Job vi. 15 ss. The point of comparison, according to ver. 1–3, and according to ver. 6, is the joy over the reappearance of what had been so painfully amissing. A similar figure occurs in Ps. lxviii. 9. The Masorites, instead of שבות read

[a] Lampe: "The pious have assuredly great cause for joy when they are delivered from a captivity which oppressed not their bodies only, but also their souls."

שבית, which is only another form. In other passages they reverse the matter. The *sowing* and the *reaping*, in ver. 5, is a figurative expression for *undertakings* and their *results*. This expression was occasioned by the comparison in the second half of the preceding verse. What *not unfrequently* happens in the dry south, that those who, in a season of drought, in consequence of the disappearance of the rain-streams, *sow* in grief and anxiety, *reap* in joy, inasmuch as the rain-streams return, cause the crop to spring up and to grow, *always* happens in the kingdom of God: undertakings begun in a time of grief are brought by the return of the Lord to a joyful issue. Although the natural circumstances lie at the bottom, we cannot maintain that the words, in the first instance, were used in reference to these, and only admit of being applied to something higher: for the unlimited *generality* of the affirmation here made does not suit the natural circumstances. The language used is from the first used of *spiritual* sowing. Besides, we cannot overlook the fact that the expression, "those who sow," is *limited*, from the context, in which only the people of the Lord had been spoken of: those who sow among the people of God, or we who sow. In the world there is much sowing in tears without any reaping in joy; and the verse before us, falsely applied, instead of the call "Repent," assumes, in the case of the world, the character of false comfort. Paul Gerhardt's hymn shews that he understood the sense correctly: "God's children sow very mournfully and in tears, but at last the year brings that for which they longed for; harvest comes when they make sheaves, then all their bitter sorrow becomes loud joy and laughter." Ezra vi. 16 shews how the words were fulfilled in those to whom they were in the first instance addressed, how the general truth, so consolatory for the church of God, was in their case realized: "And the children of Israel . . . kept the dedication of the house with *joy*, ver. 22; and they kept the feast of unleavened bread seven days with *joy*; for the Lord had made them joyful, and turned the heart of the King of Assyria to them, so that they were strengthened in the work on the house of the Lord." Compare, in reference to the dedication of the *wall of the city*, Neh. xii., especially ver. 43: "and great sacrifices were offered that day, and they were joyful, for God had made to them great joy, so that both women and chil-

dren rejoiced, and the joy of Jerusalem was heard afar of."— The subject in ver. 6 is the *sower*. The infin. absol. in both verbs denotes the continued existence of the pain and also of the joy, comp. Ew. § 280. *b*.[a] משך הזרע is properly the draught o seed which the sower takes with his hand out of the seed box. In Amos ix. 13, משך חזרע is the sower, properly he who draws the seed, draws it out of the seed box. The משך occurs in the sense of drawing also, in Job xxviii. 18, "wisdom draws stronger (in the scales) than pearls," is heavier than they.

PSALM CXXVII.

"Every thing is dependant upon the blessing of God:" in every work of man a prosperous issue does not come from his own efforts, but from the Lord. This is the contents.[b]

The Psalm falls into two strophes—God secured a dwelling, protection, nourishment, ver. 1 and 2, and posterity, ver. 3–5.

The Psalm is governed by the number three, as the number of the Mosaic blessing; Jehovah occurs thrice, in the first strophe שוא is thrice used, there are three things in which one's own striving avails not, and the third strophe consists of three verses.

The superscription attributes the Psalm to Solomon, and internal reasons go to confirm the correctness of this. It is characteristically distinguished from the nameless Psalms of degrees, and so as to mark its connection with an earlier time; it exhibits no trace of the mournful depression by which they are pervaded, the language is more vigorous, and while they throughout refer to the *whole* of the community, the *individual* is here directed to the true source of blessing. The theme of the Psalm suits Solomon, who chiefly occupied the domestic-civic territory, as Calvin justly

a Luther correctly: "The prophet intends to announce a perpetual truth by the repetition of a little word, when he says 'they go, they go!' For there is no end of the weeping until we are laid in the grave, although a little while is given to rest."

b Calvin: It was his purpose to humble the foolish confidence of men, who, forgetting God, have the audacity to attempt any thing, in dependance only on their own wisdom or strength. . . . Whatever they attempt shall come to nought, unless prosperity be granted of mere grace. . . . For even the division which many conceive of is wicked, by which a man who has acted vigorously, leaving half of the praise to God, takes the other half to himself, but the blessing of God alone ought to be extended over the whole, and to enjoy the dominion.

remarks; insomuch that expositors of a super-ecclesiastical spirit, have sought to thrust in by force the reference to the church, which they missed in the body of the Psalm itself (for example, Lampe). The striving after the worldly good expressed in the conclusion, ver. 4 and 5, is not less suitable for Solomon as the author, than for its destination as a popular and Pilgrim Song. It is also a confirmation of Solomon's being the author, the coincidence which the idea of the Psalm presents with the Proverbs; comp. especially the strikingly parallel passage, Prov. x. 22, "The blessing of the Lord it maketh rich, and labour adds nothing thereto." Finally, we recognize in ver. 2 an allusion to the personal relations of Solomon, in the words: "So gives he to his beloved in sleep." According to 2 Sam. xii. 25, Solomon received the name Jedidiah, the beloved of the Lord, and the promise made to him of the divine blessing was, according to 1 Kings iii. 5–14, given when he was asleep.

The Psalm is primarily intended for such as think too highly of human efforts, a fault which is particularly apt to betray itself in the prosperous. (Hence Tilling remarks, not without reason, that the Psalm pre-supposes the Jewish commonwealth to have been in a flourishing condition.) At the same time, since it points to the divine blessing as the one source of prosperity, it is rich in consolation to those who are in adverse circumstances, paralyzed in their activity. It would undoubtedly be this bearing of the Psalm which would be more particularly contemplated when it was used after the exile, straitened and annoyed as the new colony was in many respects by the Samaritans.

Ver. 1–2.—*A Song of the Pilgrimages.*—Ver. 1 *If the Lord does not build a house, its builders labour in vain; if the Lord does not guard a city, the watchman wakes in vain.* Ver. 2. *It is in vain for you who rise early, to delay sitting, to eat the bread of trouble; so gives he to his beloved in sleep.*—That in ver. 1 the discourse is of an actual house-building, not of carefulness for the good of the family, is manifest already from the juxtaposition of the house and the city, and then from ver. 2, to the subject of which we can hardly find a transition if we understand the building of the house in a figurative sense. The בו belongs not to בוניו, but to עמלו. The contrast in the second member is not of public as opposed to private affairs; but of protection as op-

posed to the dwelling. The security of the city comes into consideration in so far as it conditions the security of the individual. The watchman is, as in Ps. cxxx. 6, the common night-watch. That we are not to think of "all those, whose part it is to care for the welfare of a city, therefore also magistrates and rulers," is clear from שָׁקַד alone, which signifies only to wake in the sense of watching; comp. Ps. cii. 7, Prov. viii. 34. The Psalmist has here before his eyes those who strive and labour without God. Hence, he renders only the one side prominent. He would have spoken quite otherwise, if he had had in his eye such as, in false confidence on God, indolently lay their hands on their bosom. It is not working, which since the fall is of divine ordination, and foresight, that are condemned, but only the pernicious error, quite destructive of prayer, that one can succeed in accomplishing somewhat without the divine aid.—In ver. 2 the *sitting*, in contrast to the standing or rising up for the purpose of working, is the *resting*: they hasten to go to work, and delay to leave off from it; comp. Ps. cxxxix. 2, Lam. iii. 63, Deut. vi. 7, xv. 19. The exposition of sitting by: at work (Luther: and sits long at it), with which Is. v. 11 is to be compared, has, besides this passage, the fact against it, that sitting at work was unusual according to the simple manners of the Israelites. Bread of trouble is bread which is eaten amid hard labour. The words rest on Gen. iii. 17: "In bitter labour shalt thou eat of it" (the produce of the earth), and ver. 19: "In the sweat of thy brow shalt thou eat bread,"—a reference which shows that it is not the Psalmist's intention here to reprove over-driven and excessive toil. כֵּן So, agreeably to that, Job ix. 35, 1 Kings x. 12, what they in vain strive to have accomplished through their hard toil. שְׁנָא for שְׁנָה is not the accusative, but the preposition is omitted, as is frequently the case with words that are in constant use, for example, עֶרֶב, בֹּקֶר, to which שְׁנָה here is poetically made like. The exposition: he gives sleep, instead of, in sleep (LXX. Vulg.), gives an unsuitable meaning. For the subject is not about the sleep, but the gain. Sleep is not put in opposition to labour in itself (this is common to the beloved of God with the ungodly, comp. on Ps. lx. 5; to rise up early, and to be late in sitting down again, to eat the bread of trouble, is the general destination and duty of men, without complying with which no one can hope for a bless-

ing; against laziness the strongest condemnation is uttered in the Proverbs, comp. vi. 9, 10, xxxi. 15, 27, as indeed the whole of the Old Testament, is decidedly opposed to a vicious Quietism); but to *labour as a source of prosperity and well-being*. The righteous have sleep as a source of good, in a way that the ungodly have not, for they resign themselves to it when their work is faithfully done; they receive it without any effort of their own; by night the blessing comes to them they know not how; while the others accomplish nothing by the labour they undergo, and have no profit by all their pains.

Ver. 3–5.—Ver. 3. *Lo, the gift of the Lord are sons, reward is the fruit of the womb.* Ver. 4. *As arrows in the hand of a hero, so are sons of youth.* Ver. 5. *Happy he who has his quiver full of them; they shall not be put to shame, when they speak with their enemies in the gate.*—The *Lo*, in ver. 3, points to a new and particularly strikingly example of the principle, that all depends on the Lord's blessing. Children, in whom a pious spirit has always recognised a gift of the Lord—comp. Gen. xxxiii. 5, xlviii. 9—are thought of last, because the possession of them is only then a piece of good fortune, when a secure dwelling-place and an adequate support, ver. 1 and 2, have already been provided. נחלת יהוה prop. the inheritance of the Lord. Mich.: Sicut alias bona parentum in liberos descendunt, Prov. xix. 14. The expression: fruit of the womb, refers to Gen. xxx. 2, Deut. vii. 13, where, precisely under the use of this expression, the blessing of children is derived from God alone. The expression, *reward*, or hire, taken from Gen. xxx. 18, where Leah, in the birth of a son, sees a reward granted to her by God, and in consequence bestows on him the name of Issachar.—In ver. 4 and 5, the Psalmist points to the *greatness* of this divine gift, the worth of a blooming posterity. *Sons of youth* are not youthful sons, but sons begotten in youth; comp. Gen. xxxvii. 3, Is. liv. 6. Such are peculiarly strong, Gen. xlix. 3, and come then to the height of their vigour, when the declining parents need their protection. They are compared to arrows, because they provide defence against the attacks of enemies.—It is unnecessary in the words: they shall not be ashamed, ver. 5, to regard the fathers as the subject. That the sons should not be ashamed, or put to the worse, when managing the affairs of their fathers, was quite appropriate as a ground for

extolling the prosperity of the latter. דבר את, to speak with, as in Gen. xlv. 15, Ex. xxv. 22. The gate was the place of business; comp. on Ps. lxix. 12. There the strength of the sons should be put forth in support of the father's rights; and how necessary it was, even in strictly judicial matters, appears from many passages, for example, Job v. 4.

PSALM CXXVIII.

The sentiment of the Psalm is, that the fear of God and righteousness never lose their reward. As the preceding Psalm, so also this is ruled by the number three: two strophes, each of three verses, and Jehovah thrice.

The subject is not, like Ps. cxxvii., the individual fearer of God, but the ideal person of the fearers of God, the god-fearing Israel, who are also frequently personified elsewhere, for example, in Lam. iii. 1. This is clear from the expression in ver. 5: behold the good of Jerusalem, from the conclusion in ver. 6: Peace be upon Israel,—from the fact, that all the nameless pilgrim-songs refer to the whole of the community, as generally all post-exile Psalms, to the number of which, the flat and broken discourse of this Psalm, and its want of vigour and elevation, indicate that it ought to be referred; finally, from the circumstance, that all the original passages alluded to in it refer to Israel.

In a time of trouble and distress the fear of God appeared to be deprived for ever of its reward. This appearance threatened to injure it. An antidote against the disheartening sadness which would then be apt to insinuate itself upon Israel, is provided in our Psalm, on which, as is justly remarked by Tiling, the 8th chapter of Zechariah may be regarded as a commentary. "Happy is the fearer of God, say I, for consolation amid circumstances, which seem loudly to declare the reverse. Fear ye not, let there only be no failure in you, God never fails. Sing, pray, and go in the way of God, only perform faithfully thy part, and thus shall the rich blessing of the Highest be renewed to you every morning."

Ver. 1–3.—Ver. 1. *A song for the pilgrims. Happy is every one*

that fears the Lord, that walks in his ways. Ver. 2. *The labour of thy hands wilt thou eat, it is well with thee, and thou hast good.* Ver. 3. *Thy wife is a fruitful vine in the interior of thy house, thy sons are as olive plants round about thy table.—Every one,* in ver. 1, means not merely the God-fearing Israelite of earlier times, but also that of the present. The fear of God will give proof of its reality by walking in the ways of God, so that no one, upon the ground of the mere *appearance* of such a thing, may lay claim to the promised reward.—The first member of ver. 2 carries an allusion to Deut. xxviii. 33, comp. Lev. xxvi. 16, where it is threatened to the covenant-breaking Israel, that enemies should eat up the fruit of their land, and all their labour. In regard to כִּי, comp. on Ps. cxviii. 10: Zech. viii. 10, ss. forms a commentary on it. אַשְׁרֶיךָ is from Deut. xxxiii. 29. טוֹב stands as neutr., and occupies the place of a noun.—On ver. 3, comp. Zech. viii. 5: "and the streets of the city shall be full of boys and girls playing upon its streets." In like manner here also is a numerous, happy, and flourishing posterity promised to the apparently decaying Israel. Taken in regard to individuals, the promise will not altogether suit. Upon יַרְכָתַיִם, the innermost, comp. on Ps. xlviii. 2. The green olive-tree as an image of joyful prosperity also in Jer. xi. 16, Ps. lii. 9.

Ver. 4–6.—Ver. 4. *Behold thus will the man be blessed, who fears the Lord.* Ver. 5. *The Lord will bless thee out of Zion, and see the prosperity of Jerusalem all the days of thy life.* Ver. 6. *And see thy children's children. Peace upon Israel.*—Out of Zion, ver. 5, comp. on Ps. xx. 2. The imper. *see* is used in ver. 5 and 6 in the sense of a promise, as in Ps. xxxvii. 3, 4, 27, cx. 2. Jerusalem is the centre of light for the whole land. In Ps. cxxii., which was composed by David, the well-being of the whole people was already connected with his salvation. If, therefore, Jerusalem was seen flourishing, the whole people must have been so too.—A commentary on ver. 6 is to be found in Zech. viii. 4: "There shall yet old men and old women sit in the streets of Jerusalem, their staff in their hand, because of the fulness of their years." In times of calamity men die comparatively early. What is here promised to the ideal person of the God-fearing Israel, must take effect in a multitude of particular individuals. On ver. 6, last clause, comp. Ps. cxxv. 5.

PSALM CXXIX.

Numerous and severe oppressions have come upon Israel, but the Lord has delivered his people out of them all, ver. 1–4. From what has been done, faith concludes, in ver. 5–8, regarding what will be done; however proudly Israel's enemies may shine at present, their end is destruction.—As the two preceding Psalms are ruled wholly by the number three, so this Psalm, and the next one also, is ruled by the number four: two parts, each of four verses, which are again combined as pairs.

The Psalm suits perfectly well to the time to which all the nameless pilgrim-songs belong, the period after the return from the exile. At that time the experience related in ver. 1–4, was far richer than formerly; the youth of the people, according to ver. 1 and 2, was long past and gone; and the intermediate position between the deliverance already obtained, and the still existing oppression, corresponds exactly to the situation of Israel at the period in question. Still it were too much to affirm that the Psalm, viewed merely by itself, must of necessity belong to this period.

Ver. 1–4.—Ver. 1. *A song of the pilgrims. They have often oppressed me from my youth, so says Israel.* Ver. 2. *They have often oppressed me from my youth, but they have not prevailed over me.* Ver. 3. *Upon my back plowed plowers, drew long their furrows.* Ver. 4. *The Lord is righteous, cuts away the cords of the wicked.* רבת in ver. 1, as in Ps. cxxiii. 4, cxx. 6. The youth of Israel was spent in Egypt, comp. Hos. ii. 17, Jer. ii. 2, xxii. 21, Ez. xxiii. 3. *Says Israel,* comp. Ps. cxxiv. 1, cxviii. 2.—The repetition in ver. 2, serves the purpose of connecting the oppression and the deliverance immediately with each other. The *plowers* are named in ver. 3, because, as the plough the earth, so the whip tears up the back. Long furrows = long stripes and wounds. For מעגות plur. of מעגה furrow, 1 Sam. xiv. 14, the Masorites would, without just cause, read the nowhere else occurring מעגית. The ל is not the sign of the accus., but האריך is properly to appoint length.—The redemption of Israel is derived in ver. 4 from the righteousness of God, who gives to every one his own, to the righteous deliverance. Viewed in regard to its kernel, Israel

stood to the heathen world, which was hostile to it, in the relation of the righteous to the wicked. The cords, according to Ps. ii. 3, are those with which Israel was bound, and mark the hostile supremacy, the sceptre of maliciousness in Ps. cxxv. 3. According to the others, it is the image of the preceding verse which is carried out here. They understand by עבות the plough-cords. The enemies are disposed to continue the plowing onwards; then God suddenly cuts asunder the cords of the plough, and thereby separates the cattle from the plough. But the plough-cords would have required to be more exactly described, and the exposition has a forced character.

Ver. 5-8.—*Ver. 5 They shall be ashamed and turned back all who hate Zion.* Ver. 6. *They shall be as the grass of house-tops, which withers before it is pulled up.* Ver. 7. *With which the shearer fills not his hand, nor the binder of sheaves his arm.* Ver. 8. *And the passers by do not say: The blessing of the Lord be upon you, we bless you in the name of the Lord.*—The fut. in ver. 5 and 6 may either be taken as a wish, or as expressive of hope and confidence. The distinction is unessential; for the wish also would have sprung from the ground of confidence. Lampe: "From the past he passes into the future, because this is the tendency of faith, that it may learn the faithfulness of God from his former ways."—The expression, grass of the house-tops, in ver. 6, is borrowed from Isa. xxxvii. 27, where it already occurs of the enemies of the Lord and of his people. Their past prosperity is suitably marked by a comparison with the grass, which on the flat roofs of the oriental houses can easily take root, but, having no depth of soil, must soon wither. It is a proof of living faith, that the poor little flock can behold the world under this image, even when it is shining in its glory. שלף is used impers. Before it is pulled up, as to meaning, corresponds to: they shall be taken away without hands, in Job xxxiv. 20, and the expression: without hands, in Dan. ii. 34.—Ver. 7 and 8 only serve to complete the image of the despicableness of the grass of the house tops, which was to be henceforth consecrated as an emblem of the nothingness of the enemies of the kingdom of God, and to place it vividly before the eye. In ver. 8 we have the customary salutation, with which the passers by greeted the shearers, or there are here united together two standing forms of the same.

Of greeting and greeting back again, comp. Ruth ii. 4, we must certainly not think ; for the whole is put into the mouth of those who pass by.

PSALM CXXX.

From the deepest distress the church cries to the Lord, ver. 1 and 2, praying that he would in his compassion forgive their sins, through which they had been thrown into trouble, ver. 3 and 4. They have a strong conviction that he will do this, and wait, full of faith, in longing expectation for the fulfilment of his promise, ver. 5, 6, and in this believing expectation upon the Lord, who is rich in mercy toward his people, and will redeem Israel from all his sins, the Psalmist admonishes them to continue waiting.

In ver. 1–6 the Psalmist speaks in the name of Israel, in ver. 7 and 8, to Israel. The distinction is only a formal one ; for even in ver. 1–6 behind the *I* a *thou* is concealed, the *indirect* exhortation is followed only at the close by the *direct*. Comp. on this exchange of the I and the thou, the Introd. to Ps. xci. The doctrine is this : the people of God should not murmur nor complain in their suffering, but pray to their compassionate Lord and Saviour, that he would forgive their sins, and save them from the deserved punishment of these, and rest in the assurance that he will do so. This is the royal way by which we may attain to peace in affliction, and rise from that to joy.

The formal arrangement is entirely the same as in Ps. cxxix. We have two strophes, each of four verses, that of the prayer and that of the hope, and each strophe falls again into two subordinate divisions of two verses. With the preceding Psalm this forms a whole of two parts, ruled throughout by the number four ; four strophes, each Psalm with four pairs of verses, each strophe with four verses. The threefold occurrence of Jehovah in the preceding Psalm, and the fourfold here, make up the number seven, and with the threefold use of Jehovah in Ps. cxxviii. comprise the number ten. The number of the whole names of God in our Psalm (Jehovah four times, Jah once, Adonai thrice), corresponds to the number of the verses.

The Psalm entirely accords with the situation which is common

to all the nameless pilgrim-songs: Israel is plunged in deep distress. The adj. קָשֵׁב in ver. 2 points to a late time, as it occurs besides only in the Chronicles, and likewise סְלִיחָה in ver. 4, which is found elsewhere only in Daniel and Nehemiah.

Ver. 1–4.—Ver. 1. *A song of the pilgrims. Out of the depths I cry to thee, Lord.* Ver. 2. *Lord, hear my voice, let thine ears be attentive to the voice of my supplication.* Ver. 3. *If thou, Lord, wilt mark iniquities, Lord who shall stand?* Ver. 4. *For with thee is forgiveness that thou mayst be feared.*—Great misery appears not unfrequently under the image of deep waters, comp. Ps. xl., lxix., 2, 14, Is. li. 10, Ez. xxvii. 34; and of this we are certainly to think also here, although the more closely defining יָם or מַיִם is awanting. It is to be supplied from the well-known passages referred to. מַעֲמַקִּים is always used of water-depths.—On the words: to the voice of my supplication, ver. 2, comp. Ps. xxviii. 2. Ver. 1 and 2 contains only, in general, the request that God would hear the supplicating prayer: the object of that, the forgiveness of sins, is first more exactly defined in ver. 3. שָׁמַר עָוֹן signifies not to preserve sin, but to observe sin, to take account of it, Job. x. 14, xiv. 16, comp. Ps. xc. 8: "for our iniquities thou placest before thee, our secret sins in the light of thy countenance." The *standing*, in contrast to the sinking down of the guilty from anguish and the fearful expectation of things which are coming upon them—comp. Christol. on Mal. iii. 2—or even under the heavy burden of the divine punishment, comp. Nah. i. 6, *q. d.*, who then must not go to perdition! The כִּי preserves in ver. 4 its common signification. For the expression: if thou wilt have respect to our iniquities, of the preceding verse is *q. d.* have not respect to my sins, and let me not go to destruction, is only a covert prayer for the forgiveness of sins, and one which is grounded here. The production of the fear of God is marked as the aim of the bestowal of the forgiveness of sins. The forgiveness of sin is the most glorious manifestation of the divine glory; the treasures of his love, compassion, and fidelity (he has guaranteed them to his own, of whom alone the discourse is here), are displayed in it, and the mind must, through the apprehension of these, be filled with childlike reverence at the greatness and holiness of God (this is here designated by fear, Lampe: "for since it follows pardon, it can no longer proceed from the fear of punish-

ment.") The merely punitive righteousness would not awaken the fear of God but destroy it. Calvin: "the apprehension of divine judgment without the hope of pardon strikes terror, which necessarily gives rise to hatred."

Ver. 5-8.—Ver. 5. *I wait for the Lord, my soul waits, and I hope in his word.* Ver. 6. *My soul waits upon the Lord more than watchmen for the morning; watchmen for the morning.* Ver. 7. *Hope Israel upon the Lord, for with the Lord is mercy and much redemption with him.* Ver. 8. *And he will redeem Israel from all his iniquities.*—The expression: my soul waits, in ver. 5, is stronger than: I wait. I long from my heart. The word is, according to Ps. cxix 74, 81, 82, 114, 147, the word of promise. The Psalmist waits and hopes, that he might obtain the fulfilment of it in his own experience.—At the beginning of ver. 6 the verb is to be supplied from the preceding verse. מִן is prae. To the watchman the night is very long, and so is to the distressed the night of weeping. Anxious longing loves repetition. Luther falsely: from one morning watch to another. The redemption from iniquity, ver. 8, is accomplished by the removal of their consequences. That we must not give to עֲוֹנוֹת the sense of punishment or sufferings, appears already from ver. 3.

PSALM CXXXI.

The people of the Lord should be free from all high-flying thoughts and ambitious projects and enterprises, and in childlike humility should expect their salvation only from him, so shall they be safe.

The national reference of the Psalm is clear from ver. 3, where Israel is addressed. Accordingly it must also be Israel, not the Psalmist, that appears speaking in ver. 1 and 2. The supposition, that in these verses the Psalmist represents his own disposition, and then in ver. 3 exhorts the people to cherish the same, has the analogies against it: in other places, where a similar exchange of the I and the thou occurs, the distinction is only that of an indirect and a direct paraenesis, so that the expression: my heart is not high, must import as to its meaning: Israel, let not

thy heart be high; comp., besides, on the preceding Psalm. Then the supposition of a general reference of ver. 1 and 2 is already required by the general analogy of the pilgrim-songs. Finally, ver. 3 does not simply call to the disposition represented in ver. 1 and 2, but gives to the subject of the two first verses an essential supplement; so that it will not suit to set off ver. 1 and 2 by themselves—there without high-mindedness, here waiting in faith upon the Lord.

The Psalm is ascribed in the superscription to David, and bears, notwithstanding its small compass, the clear marks of having such an origin. That it must have been composed in a season of prosperity and abundance for the people, is shewn by the protestation against cherishing high-minded thoughts and undertakings. The danger in this respect arises only from prosperity; in times of trouble, such as those succeeding the Babylonish exile, they vanish of themselves. Then, the childlike humility and unpretending disposition, growing out of living faith, which here gives utterance to itself, is most characteristic of David, who here, in order to shew Israel how it should be, gave a representation of his own inner man, how it actually was. Finally, ver. 1 carries a close reference to Psalms of David.—The affirmation, that the word: Israel, wait upon the Lord, is borrowed from ver. 7 of the Post-exile Psalm cxxx., precisely reverses the relation. The author of that late nameless Psalm has undoubtedly borrowed it from this earlier one, and done so from regard to the place it occupied in the series, as immediately before the latter.

Ver. 1–3.—Ver. 1. *A song of the pilgrims.* | *Of David. Lord, my heart is not high, and my eyes are not proud, and I walk not in great things, and those too wonderful for me.* Ver. 2. *Truly I smoothed and silenced my soul, like one weaned by his mother; like one weaned is my soul with me.* Ver. 3. *Wait, Israel, upon the Lord, from this time even for ever.*—We must not overlook the address to the Lord, with which ver. 1 immediately begins, *q. d.* Lord, thou who art exalted, and regardest the lowly, and the proud knowest afar off, Ps. cxxxviii. 6, I do not shut the gate against thy grace, by cherishing a heart that is haughty, &c. Pride, haughtiness, appears generally as the result of prosperity. So already in Deut. xxxii. 15. Of Uzziah it is said in 2 Chron. xxvi. 16, "And when he was strong his heart was high;" of

Hezekiah, in 2 Chron. xxxii. 25, "And Hezekiah repaid ill the gift which had been done him, for his heart was high, and there went forth wrath upon him, and upon Judah and Jerusalem." Pride has its seat in the heart, and betrays itself especially in the eyes. Comp. in particular the parallel passages in Psalms of David, Ps. xviii. 27, "For thou helpest the poor people, and the lofty eyes thou bringest down;" Ps. ci. 5, "he who has proud eyes and is high-minded, him will I not suffer." The הלך with ב of the pathway on which one moves or walks; not: non ingredior res magnas, Gesen.; but: I do not walk in them, my course does not lie in them, I have nothing to do with them. The Piel marks the continued going, proceeding onwards. Too *wonderful* for any one is every thing that lies above his power and sphere. The people of God can never give up their claim to the dominion of the world. This has been always kept in view through the word of God, from the first period of their existence. But it is one thing to hope in meekness and humility for that which God has promised, and another thing with one's own hand either to attempt high things, for which no warrant or promise is given in the word of God, or to seek in that way to accomplish what has this ground to rest upon. The difference is rendered palpable in the case of David himself. With thankfulness and joy he took from the hand of God the gift of the kingdom. But he resisted every temptation to seize, with his own hand, what God had promised in his own time to bestow upon him. He waited quietly till God had removed his predecessor out of the way. Further, David's heart nourished itself on the still more glorious promises which he received after his ascension to the throne, as Ps. xviii. shews: he was far from that false humility which declines what is offered by God. But he himself moved neither hand nor foot to precipitate the fulfilment. He constantly confined himself merely to defence, and never launched out upon wars of conquest. And if at any time a spirit of pride rose up within him, as it did at the numbering of the people, he presently returned in genuine repentance to a state of unconditional dependance upon the Lord, and a quiet waiting for his salvation; comp. on Ps. xxx. That such a posture of heart is the true way to salvation, that one only *attains* to the great, when one does not *walk* in the great, most distinctly do we learn this from Da-

vid's example. In ver. 2 the אם לא is to be taken as a solemn asseveration. Only he who can protest after the manner of the Psalmist here, can become partaker of the blessing thence arising. שׁוה to make like, to even, or smoothe, Is. xxviii. 25, by the removal of false elevations, comp. Is. xl. 4. The *silencing* refers, according to the connection, specially to the stilling of the motions of pride. The point of comparison between the soul and the weaned = the small child (comp. Is. xi. 8, xxviii. 9), is the unpretending humility. Exactly parallel is Matth. xviii. 3, "except ye be converted and become as little children," and ver. 4, "whoever therefore humbles himself as this child." *As one weaned*, not as such an one smoothes and silences, but that it is like, or I am like it. The *mother* brings the image of the little child vividly before the eye, and she is specially thought of on account of the עלי, upon me, for with me; comp. on Ps. xlii. 4. According to the idea now generally prevalent, the weaned must form the contrast to the suckling, with its constantly restless desires after its mother's breast. But by the connection the Psalmist cannot, as this view supposes, wish to express the absence of passion and desire in general, but only freedom from the violent emotions which the lofty spirit awakens, to which also the connection of *silencing* with *evening* or smoothing, corresponding to the ταπεινοῦν in Matthew, points:—גמול is, according to the *usus loquendi*, not the child just weaned, but the small child in minority; the restless desire continues still with the weaned, and the freedom it possesses is the farthest thing possible from being properly a characteristic of it; the mother's milk is not specially marked as an object of this desire, and is only assumed to be so by these expositors.—In ver. 3 there is opposed to the lofty enterprising after high things by one's own hand, a still and confident waiting upon the Lord, who will never leave and forsake his Israel, and his salvation. Israel must from this time, even for ever, wait upon his God, so will he be glorified by him from this time, even for ever. For such as put their confidence in God, them he abandons not, while he casts down those who are full of confidence in their own hearts.

PSALM CXXXII.

David zealously laboured, and earnestly applied himself, to prepare a settled place for the sanctuary of the Lord, ver. 1–5. And this striving accomplished its end, ver. 6–9. This God should and will recompense for him in the revivification of his dead race and kingdom, true to the promise, which had been given to him, on account of his zeal, ver. 10–12. For, he has chosen Zion, the good of which is inseparably connected with David's posterity, and promised, that David's kingdom must continually flourish there, and rise nobly superior above every misfortune. The Psalm falls into two chief divisions, the grounding of the prayer and hope, and the prayer and hope itself.

The Psalm is to be referred to the times of the new colony from its namelessness alone: all nameless pilgrim-songs belong to these times. It participates also in the character of these nameless Psalms: as it is a cry to God, to listen to them from the midst of their distress. Its starting point and ground is formed, as in Ps. lxxxix., by the depressed state of David's race and kingdom. In its form, too, it bears the character of a later time. The individual parts are light, the connection is not without difficulty. The אהל ביתי and ערש יצועי, in ver. 3, the expression: we heard it, for, of it, in ver. 7, could scarcely have proceeded from an older writer.

The Psalm revives again, especially in times of great depression to the church. It teaches her to hope in such times, when nothing is to be hoped for, and the rather, as the hope expressed in it concerning the revivication of David's kingdom, on the basis of God's word, though amid circumstances of despair, has been so gloriously fulfilled in the manifestation of Christ.

Ver. 1–5.—Ver. 1. *A song of the pilgrims. Remember, Lord, for David, all his trouble.* Ver. 2. *Who swore to the Lord, vowed to the strong one of Jacob.* Ver. 3. *I will not come into the tabernacle of my house, nor ascend the couch of my bed.* Ver. 4. *I will not give sleep to mine eyes, nor slumber to mine eyelids.* Ver. 5. *Till I find a place for the Lord, a dwelling for the strong one of Jacob.*—The commencement is taken from the prayer of Solomon at the consecration of the temple, 2 Chron. vi. 42: "Lord God,

turn not away the face of thine anointed, remember the pious deeds, חסדים (comp. 2 Chron. xxxv. 26), of David, thy servant." A verbal allusion is made at the beginning of the second part, in ver. 10, to the first half of that verse. It is the writer of the Psalm who refers to the passage in Chronicles, as Lampe justly notices, not the reverse, as most modern commentators. David's trouble (ענות Inf. nominasc. in Pü.) was an internal one. The Lord had then no dwelling. The sacred tent was without the ark of the covenant, a body without a soul; and the ark was at Kirjath-jearim, deposited as in its grave, without any rites of worship, well-nigh lost sight of; comp. on Ps. lxxviii. David himself says, in 1 Chron xiii. 3: "We did not seek after it in the days of Saul." David *tormented* himself with anxiety to have this afflicting state of things brought to an end. He was dragged hither and thither by a diversity of thoughts; he was afraid that possibly the anger of the Lord was not yet passed away, that still the time of grace had not arrived; and this fear especially took possession of him, when the misfortune occurred at the first attempt to introduce the ark; comp. 2 Sam. vi. 9: "And David was afraid of the Lord that day, and said, how shall the ark of the Lord come to me?" Meanwhile the earnest desire of David to have the dwelling of his God in his capital soon again prevailed over this fear, and would not allow him to rest till he had accomplished the desired end. Scarcely was this object gained, when the new desire awoke in David's bosom for the erection of a solid temple, with which God was well-pleased, though he did not permit its being carried into execution by him personally. As a reward for this sincere care about *his* house, the Lord granted to David the promise of perpetuity to his own house, which he is here besought anew to fulfil, at a time when he seemed to have forgotten both it and the occasion of it, the godly zeal of his servant.—The designation of God: the Strength of Jacob, in ver. 2 and 5, is taken from Gen. xlix. 25.—Ver. 3 and 4 is to be explained from 1 Cor. vii. 29, 30: David dwelt in his house as if he did not dwell in it (comp. 2 Sam. vii. 2), and slept unsoundly. *Tent* is used poetically for dwelling.

Ver. 6–9.—Ver. 6. *Lo! we heard of it in Ephratah, we found it in the forest-field.* Ver. 7. *Now would we come to his dwelling, pray before his footstool.* Ver. 8. *Arise, Lord, into thy rest,*

thou and thy mighty ark. Ver. 9. *Let thy priests be clothed with righteousness, and let thy saints rejoice.*—We have here before us the words which David spoke when his care for the sanctuary of the Lord had reached its immediate end, by the consecration of the sanctuary in Zion, after the introduction of the ark of the covenant.—The expression in ver. 6: We heard of it, the ark, which is not expressly mentioned, indeed, in the preceding context, but presents itself to the eye of the speaker and the people, is *q. d.:* We knew of it only by hearsay, no one went to see it, it was almost out of mind, comp. Job xlii. 6, Ps. xviii. 44. Ephratah is always the ancient name of Bethlehem, and every other explanation is to be regarded as arbitrary. There David spent his youth, while he had as yet only heard of the invisible ark of the covenant. According to the current exposition, Ephratah must stand here for Ephraim, and the words must refer to the residence of the ark at Shiloh. But the אֶפְרָתִי, the Ephraimite, in Jud. xii. 5, etc., is far from shewing that Ephratah can stand for Ephraim; that is a pure abbreviation, which can have no place here; to say: we heard in Ephratah, for we heard that it is, would be very hard; Ephratah must rather be the place where the report of it was heard; at Shiloh the ark was anything but lost sight of, it was rather the centre of the whole nation, nor was it raised by David himself above the dignity which it there possessed; also at the time here spoken of, the Lord, according to ver. 5, had no dwelling, while in Shiloh the ark was in the sacred tent. The expression: We found it, points to the circumstance, that the ark had been lost. In the *forest-field*, at Kirjath-jearim, a forest-town, where the ark was deposited after its return from the land of the Philistines. The forest-field is thought of, because the ark did not stand in the city, but in the suburbs, 1 Sam. vii. 1, 2 Sam. vi. 3, 4, *buried in darkness and solitude.*—Ver. 7 must not, with Maurer, be referred to the assembling of the people at Kirjath-jearim to bring away the ark: for there neither had the Lord a dwelling, nor was supplication made to him. The words rather refer to the dedication-festival at Zion. On the ark as the footstool of the Lord, see on Ps. xcix. 5.—Ver. 8 and 9 are taken almost literally from Solomon's prayer at the dedication of the temple, to which allusion had also been made in ver. 1 and 10. It is said there in 2 Chron.

vi. 41: "And now arise, Lord, into thy rest, thou and thy mighty ark. Let thy priests, Lord, be clothed with salvation, and thy saints rejoice in goodness." What Solomon then spoke is here, on a similar occasion, put into the mouth of David. In the expression: thou and thy mighty ark, David points to the circumstance, that the introduction of the ark into the new sanctuary might justly be regarded as the introduction of the Lord himself. The ark was no mere symbol, but an image and pledge of the real presence of God with his people. Calvin: "For it was not a dead or empty ghost, but really showed that God was nigh to his church." The prayer, in ver. 9, joins on immediately to ver. 8, having special reference to the ark as the mighty. The righteousness is the matter-of-fact declaration of righteousness and justification, which is contained in the bestowal of salvation; comp. on Ps. xxiii. 3, xxiv. 5. Too hastily have some concluded, from the corresponding תשועה in the original passage, and ישע in ver. 16, that צדק here means precisely salvation.

Ver. 10–12.—Ver. 10. *For the sake of David thy servant! Turn not away the face of thine anointed!* Ver. 11. *The Lord has sworn to David truth; he will not turn from it: I will set for thee on thy throne the fruit of thy body.* Ver. 12. *If thy sons will keep my covenant, and my testimony, which I will teach them, then shall also their sons sit for ever upon thy throne.* —That after: David thy servant, in ver. 10, a mark of exclamation is to be inserted—that we are to supply: hear our prayer, avert our misery, or perhaps: fulfil that prayer of his which is given in ver. 9, is clear from the original passage in 2 Chron. vi. 42: "Lord God, turn not away the face of thine anointed, remember the piety of David thy servant"—where likewise there are two independent members—and also from ver. 1, which is resumed here again. What the Lord should do on account of David, or how he should for David's sake hear his prayer, or the prayers of the church, is first more exactly indicated in ver. 11, 12: there was failing a shoot of David, and along therewith a channel for the divine blessings, comp. the words of Solomon in 1 Kings viii. 25: "And now, Lord God of Israel, keep to thy servant David, my father, what thou saidst to him; there shall not fail a man from before me, who sits upon the throne of Israel." For the sake of David is, according to the preceding context, and accord-

ing to the standing use of this formula, in the history of the kings of Israel, 1 Kings xi. 12, 13, xv. 4, 2 Kings viii. 19, &c., *q. d.* because David was acceptable to thee through his godly zeal, the fruit of his living faith; and the remark of Stier: "it does not presuppose, perhaps, any personal desert in the historical David, but means the gracious promise made to David in 1 Kings viii. 24–26," is to be rejected. That the anointed of the second member is no other than David, is evident from the parallelism, from ver. 1 and ver. 17, and also from the original passage. We are not to think of a *living* king for this reason alone, that the non-existence of such formed the very starting-point of the Psalm. David had *prayed* in the preceding context. Of another anointed there is no trace in the whole Psalm. The face of the anointed is the humbly suppliant one, comp. on Ps. lxxxiv. 9. With this David stands before his race and people in all necessities, and God can never, forgetting his faith and pious zeal, turn away his supplication.—The church should the less doubt of the fulfilment of the prayer respecting salvation expressed in ver. 10, as the Lord had pledged himself to it by a solemn oath: to doubt concerning it is to blaspheme God. *He has sworn*, as it were in answer and recompense to David's oath. Mention is also made of the swearing in Ps. lxxxix. 4, 36. There, just as here, faith clings in a time of trouble to this promise of God. On the word: truth, comp. 2 Sam. vii. 28, where David says, "Thou art God, and thy words are truth." The *condition* of the preservation of the seed of David is brought out in ver. 12, in order to explain the apparent contrariety between the idea and the reality, which presented itself to the eye. It was explained by the circumstance that the condition was not fulfilled. But whenever this hindrance should be removed, then should the promise also come into force. In the original passage, 2 Sam. vii., in ver. 14 and 15, it is expressly said, that the non-fulfilment of the condition might prove indeed a *suspension*, but never a *withdrawal* of the promise, which cannot possibly fall into abeyance for ever. On עֵדוּת, comp. Ew. § 183. *a*. The teaching of the testimony of God, of his law revealed by Moses, is an internal one, made through the spirit, comp. Ps. xc., xix., li. cxliii. 10, "teach me to do thy will," xciv. 12, and especially Ps. cxix., which is throughout per-

vaded by the conviction, that in the keeping of God's commandments nothing can be effected, that God alone can here give the will and accomplish the result.

In ver. 13–18 the prayer has respect to the restoration of the race of David, and a foundation is laid for the hope of this, by referring to the divine choice of Zion, the good of which was inseparably bound up with the seed of David. As truly as God has chosen Zion, so certainly must he also raise up for David a branch, through which, to his people concentrated there, he will impart salvation. For the principle: without David no salvation for Zion, stands fast for ever.—Ver. 13. *For the Lord has chosen Zion, he has selected it for his habitation.* Ver. 14. "*This is my rest for ever, here will I dwell, because I have selected it.* Ver. 15. *Its food will I bless, its needy satisfy with bread.* Ver. 16. *And its priests will I clothe with salvation, and its saints shall shout for joy.* Ver. 17. *There will I make sprout for David a horn, prepare a lamp for mine anointed.* Ver. 18. *His enemies will I clothe with shame, and upon him shall his crown flourish.*"—The sense of ver. 17 is this: *there shall I* (in all times of weakness) *make sprout a horn for David,* grant to him new power, *prepare* (in all times of darkness) "*a lamp for mine anointed,* accomplish for him perpetually deliverance in misfortune. The promise here uttered found its most glorious fulfilment in Christ; however, we must not understand the declaration as *exclusively* Messianic, we must not conceive precisely Christ to be meant by the horn and the lamp. Against this is the original passage, Ps. xviii. 28, where the lamp is the image of prosperity, and also Ez. xxix. 21: "In that day will I make a horn to sprout to the house of Israel," *q. d.* I will grant him power against his enemies, where the Messianic explanation is unsuitable (see Hävernick); further, Ps. lxxv. 4, and the passages quoted there. It is a further confirmation of this view, that the promise, which is rested upon here, does not point to the Messias alone, but to the whole line of David's seed, as is clear already from 1 Kings xi. 36. That David is the anointed, is manifest from that very place: "And to his son will I give one tribe, that David my servant may have a lamp always before me in Jerusalem," and the parallel passages.—For *flourishing,* in ver. 18,

several, who cannot see their way through the figurative expression, would arbitrarily substitute *shining;* comp. Is. xxviii. 1. The suff. refer to David, who ever reigns in his posterity.

PSALM CXXXIII.

The Psalm is a celebration of brotherly harmony, the loveliness of which is represented under a double image. The *behold!* with which it begins, shews that the Psalmist had before his eyes a lovely meeting of brethren, and thence took occasion to direct attention to the blessing of such a meeting. That this meeting has a religious centre, is manifest at once from the whole character of the Psalm itself, and shines out with special clearness from the comparison made with the priesthood, in ver. 2. According to ver. 3, it refers to the assembling of the people at Zion, as that was wont to take place since the time of David at the great festivals, especially at the Passover. With this the superscription entirely coincides.—The Psalm forms a side-piece to Ps. cxxii., which sought to form in the people a heart for the new capital, or rather to lend words to the heart of the people, already filled with love to it. David brings here to the consciousness of the people the glory of the fellowship of the saints, which had so long fallen into abeyance, and the restoration of which had begun with the setting up of the tabernacle in Zion, after it had been interrupted during the entire period in which the ark had been buried as in its grave at Kirjath-jearim.—The supposition that the Psalm refers to the unity of the remnant who had come back from exile, rests upon an arbitrary rejection of the superscription, and an overlooking of the fresh, original, pregnant character of the little Psalm. It is against the supposition also, that the mournful character which pervades all the post-exile Psalms, does not meet us here. The Psalm manifestly proceeds from a prosperous condition for the people of God, on which the eye of the Psalmist lingers with delight. The people of God, according to ver. 3, rejoice in the possession of life and blessing, on account of the good specially mentioned by the Psalmist and generally.

Ver. 1–3.—Ver. 1. *A Song of the Pilgrims. Of David. Behold how good and how lovely it is, that brethren also dwell together.*

Ver. 2. *As the good oil upon the head, flowing down upon the beard, the beard of Aaron, which flows down upon the border of his garments.* Ver. 3. *As Hermon's dew, which descends upon the mountains of Zion; for there has the Lord commanded the blessing, life for evermore.—Brethren,* ver. 1, were all the children of Israel toward each other, because they were all sons of God. This also is not to be overlooked or impaired. The brotherly relation had constantly existed, but what should have followed upon this, their *feeling* themselves to be brethren, and, as such, living harmoniously together, this for a long time had been wanting. The *good oil,* ver. 2, is the holy anointing oil, for the preparation of which directions are given in Ex. xxx. 22 ss. It consisted of olive oil, mixed with four of the best spices. The predicate *good* does not refer simply to the physical quality of this oil. The Psalmist views it with a spiritual eye, and, so viewed, it served as an image to him of what was most glorious and lovely; it was the symbol of the spirit of God; comp. Christol. on Dan. ix. 24; Bähr Symbolik ii. s. 171. On the expression: on the head, comp. Ex. xxix. 7; Lev. viii. 12, xxi. 10, Aaron stands here not simply for the high-priest, but rather as the venerable father of the whole priesthood, whose dignity was still further increased by the goodness of the oil. The image is not taken from what was then visible, but from scripture; comp. Ex. xxix. 7, xl. 13. There is no reason to look away from the person of Aaron, and it is indeed very doubtful, whether the later high-priests were anointed, and whether the anointing of Aaron was not rather the first and the last, available for all times. To the goodness of the high-priest's anointing belonged its copiousness; flowing down upon the beard, through which the anointing of the high-priest was distinguished from that of the priests. Only with Aaron was the oil richly poured out upon the head: the common priests were merely streaked with oil upon the forehead; see Bähr. יְשִׁירָה refers to the beard, not to the anointing, which must not flow down upon the holy garments, but was only intended for the hair, from that of the head to that of the long beard. פִּי is the opening or border at the neck of the garment.—The point of comparison in ver. 3 has been falsely made out by several. It is fixed by the: how good and how lovely, in ver. 1. In the oil the goodness is expressly marked as

the point of comparison. So that the *lovely* specially remains for the dew. The passage is to be taken thus: Hermon, Hermon's dew = lovely dew. The dew is the more lovely the more glorious the place where it falls, as, in ver. 2, the goodness of the oil was heightened by the dignity of the person who was anointed with it. The question, how could the dew of Hermon descend upon the mountains of Zion, is consequently disposed of. Brotherly unity resembles a lovely dew, which descends on the hills of Zion, where this unity is so strikingly exemplified. The local שָׁם, there, refers not to the brotherly unity, but to the place mentioned immediately before, the hills of Zion. To Zion, which comes here into consideration as the then bearer of the kingdom of God, belongs blessing and prosperity generally, therefore also the blessing and prosperity connected with brotherly unity, such as is not to be found in the world, nor grows on the soil of nature, but only in that of grace, which is confined to the kingdom of God.

PSALM CXXXIV.

Ver. 1 and 2 contain a call to the servants of God to praise him and supplicate his aid, followed in ver. 3 by the pronouncing of a blessing.

That the Psalm has a dramatic character, appears from the transition from the plural to the singular, and still more decisively from the circumstance, that the pronouncing of a blessing in ver. 3 cannot proceed from the same person, as the entreaty at the Lord to bless in ver. 1 and 2. But the determination of the persons speaking cannot possibly be left to caprice, or any sort of conjecture. It must discover itself with certainty from the Psalm itself. Now who it is that speaks in ver. 1 and 2 is clear from the superscription, according to which the Psalm is a pilgrim-song. Hence, it can only be the community represented by the pilgrim-bands. This addresses the servants of the Lord, who were assembled at evening in the house of the Lord. The address in ver. 3 can only be directed to those who had themselves addressed in the preceding verses, the people, and must have proceeded from those who had then been addressed, the priests. The matter also agrees with this, which just consists

of the Mosaic blessing, that could only be pronounced by the priests.

Accordingly the outline of the Psalm may be given more exactly thus: the pilgrim bands present themselves on the evening of their arrival at the temple, and call upon the servants of the Lord, who were there at the time of the evening sacrifice, to praise the Lord in their name and that of the people, and to pray to him. Coming with such a state of mind, they could not remain long without the blessing, therefore the priests answered them by pronouncing that. Such a Psalm was most fitly appropriated as the close of the whole pilgrim-book; so that the collector of it, who was at the same time the author of all the nameless pilgrim-songs, undoubtedly placed this Psalm purposely at the end, or composed it with a view to its forming the conclusion of the whole. So already Lampe: forte ille, qui fasciculum canticorum graduum collegit—hoc canticum tanquam aptum epilogum addidit.

That the Psalm was composed in a time of depression, appears from the call to praise and to supplicate the Lord (see the exposition), and the "creator of heaven and earth," of the conclusion, which points the church in their felt impotence to the almightiness of their Lord.

The important doctrine which is imprinted on the Psalm, is, that in the depressing and difficult circumstances of the church of God, the sure way to obtain the blessing of the Lord is to bless him.

Ver. 1-3.—Ver. 1. *A Song of the Pilgrims. Behold, bless the Lord, all ye servants of the Lord, ye who stand in the house of the Lord by night.* Ver. 2. *Lift up your hands to the sanctuary, and bless the Lord.* Ver. 3. *The Lord bless thee out of Zion, the creator of heaven and earth.*—The *behold* in ver. 1, the echo of that in the preceding Psalm, shews that the subject is a business immediately in hand, that it has to do with what was real, and must be done upon the spot. The expression, indeterminate in itself: Ye servants of the Lord, which might even be applied to the whole body of the people, receives its more specific determination from what is added: who stand in the house of the Lord. That we are not to think of the Levites, is evident from the answer in ver. 3; to bless the people was a privilege of the priests. To bless the Lord, is, as to its import, as much as, to praise and

glorify him. But the word itself is to be retained on account of its correspondence with that in ver. 3: the Lord bless thee. This also renders it manifest that the people are here to be understood as calling upon the servants of the Lord to praise the Lord *in their* (the people's) *name and from their soul.* Else, if ver. 1 and 2 were regarded as a mere reminding of the priests to discharge the duty of their office, the address and answer would run into each other. The praise of God, as this answer shews, is no idle service; it is only a veiled and indirect prayer, he is praised as the one that can and will help. The service of the priests terminated with the offering of the evening sacrifice. Even with the Levitical singers there is not found a trace of their being heard by night. 1 Chron. ix. 33 has been improperly brought as a proof to the contrary. The expression: by night, can be referred with less difficulty to the evening service, as it is used of this also in Ps. xcii. 2. Upon the lifting up of the hands, ver. 2, as the gesture of prayer, symbolizing the elevation of the heart, comp. on Ps. xxviii. 2: "while I lift up my hands to thy most holy oracle." Luther falsely: in the sanctuary.—At ver. 3 we are to supply, according to what has been remarked: because thou thus blessest the Lord. That the people are addressed, is clear from the parallel passage, Ps. cxxviii. 5. Only in that case does the Psalm form a suitable conclusion to the whole pilgrim-book. That the future is to be taken optatively—not: he will bless thee—is clear from the undeniable reference to the Mosaic blessing, Num. vi. 24. The expression: creator of heaven and earth, comp. Ps. cxxi. 2, cxxiv. 8, forms the counterpoise to the depth of misery and weakness in which the community of God was sunk.

PSALM CXXXV.

The Psalmist exhorts all to praise the Lord, ver. 1-4, and then declares his glory, in nature, ver. 5-7, in his wonderful works for Israel, ver. 8–12, which will again repeat themselves in the future and raise them out of their wretched state, ver. 13, 14, contrasts with him the vain idols and their equally vain worshippers, ver. 15-18, and finally returns again to call upon men to praise God, ver. 19-21.

The Psalm falls into three strophes, each of seven verses. The seven in the two first, which also correspond in this, that the Jehovah in each of them is used six times, is divided into three and four, and in the last into five and two. The Jehovah there occurs thrice. The same number of times also is the Halleluiah used in the Psalm, with which it begins and ends.

It is impossible to avoid perceiving that the Psalm stands in immediate connection with the preceding one. In regard to the subject, it is related to that as the execution to the plan. The call at the beginning to the servants of the Lord, who stand in the house of the Lord to praise him, corresponds to Ps. cxxxiv. i. 2; and the conclusion in ver. 21 bears respect to cxxxiv. 3.[a] It is besides also characteristic of this Psalm, that it leans strongly upon the earlier writings, especially on Ps. cxv. As the latter belongs to the time when the foundation of the second temple was laid, and Ps. cxxxiv. probably to the time when the building suffered interruption, so the present one will bring us down to a period somewhat later in the affairs of the new colony.

That the Psalm was composed in view of the threatening and opposing power of the world, is clear from the manifestations of God in the past, over which the Psalm lingers with peculiar fondness in ver. 8-11. The main design of the Psalm, as intended to console and encourage, to drive away all grief and all fear, by extolling God's praise, discovers itself in ver. 13, 14, where, on the ground of what the Lord had done in former times, the hope is raised of his displaying his glory in the future for the good of his people. As the representation of the glory of the true God has its bearing on the salvation of Israel, so the representation of the vanity of idols reflects upon the impotence of their worshippers—comp. ver. 8.

Ver. 1–7.—Ver. 1. *Halleluiah. Praise the Lord, praise ye servants of the Lord.* Ver. 2. *Ye who stand in the house of the Lord, in the courts of the house of our God.* Ver. 3. *Praise the*

[a] Amyrald already remarks: "This Psalm has so much in common with the preceding one, that they both alike contain an exhortation to praise the Lord. This, however, differs from the other, in that the former contains a simple exhortation, while here the exhortation is accompanied, and as it were supported, by the mention of certain works of God, which are specially deserving of being celebrated; in the other the exhortation is addressed to the Levites alone, in this it chiefly, indeed, belongs to the priests and Levites, yet so as, at the same time, to embrace the whole Israelitish people.

Lord, for the Lord is good, sing praise to his name, for he is lovely. Ver. 4. *For the Lord chose Jacob to himself, Israel for his treasure.* Ver. 5. *For I know that the Lord is great, and our Lord more than all gods.* Ver. 6. *Whatever he willed he did, in heaven and on earth, in the sea and all floods.* Ver. 7. *Who makes the vapours to ascend from the end of the earth, changes lightnings into rain, brings forth the wind from his chambers.*—The halleluiah at the beginning announces in one word the subject of the Psalm. That under "the servants of the Lord," in ver. 1, not merely the priests are to be understood, as in Ps. cxxxiv., but the whole people, is rendered more evident from the mention of the courts in ver. 2, and from the conclusion in ver. 19, 20, where the whole of the Lord's servants are distributed into their several parts, priests, Levites, and believers. But the difference between this and Ps. cxxxiv. is of no great moment. For there the priests must praise the Lord as from the heart of believers; and that here too the priests stand at the head is manifest from ver. 19.—Ver. 4 gives the reason for the call now addressed to praise the Lord. God had chosen Israel, and among them had especially unfolded his goodness and his glory, so that they, above all other people, had matter and occasion for glorifying and praising him. What in the sequel is said in celebration of his praise is chiefly drawn from the special manifestations he had given of himself in his dealings toward Israel. Upon סְגֻלָּה, not property in general, but something particularly precious and valuable, kept apart from all other property, see Christol. iii. p. 430.—*For I know*, ver. 5, such rich proofs has he given to me of his glory.—ver. 6 rests upon Ps. cxv. 3; ver. 7 upon Jer. x. 13, li. 16.—*From the end of the earth*, ver. 7, comp. Ps. lxi. 2, the earth to its farthest limits, the whole earth, which can never withdraw itself from his mighty working—comp. Gen. xix. 4, Jer. li. 16. The lightning is turned into rain, in so far as the storm dissolves itself in rain.

Ver. 8-14.—Ver. 8. *Who slew the first-born in Egypt, both of man and of beast.* Ver. 9. *And sent signs and wonders into thee, O Egypt, against Paraoh and all his servants.* Ver 10. *Who slew many nations, and killed mighty kings.* Ver. 11. *Sihon, king of the Amorites, and Og, king of Bashan, and all the kingdoms of Canaan.* Ver. 12. *And gave their land for an*

inheritance. for an inheritance to Israel his people. Ver. 13, *Lord, thy name endures for ever; Lord, thy memorial endures for ever and ever.* Ver. 14. *For the Lord will judge his people, and will repent himself of his servants.*—The expression: in thy midst, Egypt, in ver. 9, is formed after; in thy midst, Jerusalem, in Ps. cxvi. 19.—*Thy name*, ver. 13, which would go down, and *thy memorial* which would perish, if thou didst not freshen them up by thy deeds of omnipotence and love.—Ver. 14 rests with intentional literality upon Deut. xxxii. 36. On the expression: he will repent himself of his servants, comp. on Ps. xc. 13.

Ver. 15–21.—Ver. 15. *The idols of the heathen are silver and gold, the work of men's hands.* Ver. 16. *Mouth have they and speak not, eyes have they and see not.* Ver. 17. *Ears have they, and hear not, and there is also no breath in their mouth.* Ver. 18. *They who make them are like them, all who trust in them.* Ver. 19. *Ye of the house of Israel, bless the Lord, ye of the house of Aaron bless the Lord.* Ver. 20. *Ye of the house of Levi, bless the Lord; ye who fear the Lord, bless the Lord.* Ver. 21. *Blessed be the Lord out of Zion, who dwells at Jerusalem. Halleluiah.*—Ver. 15–18 literally corresponds with Ps. cxv. 4ss., with one important exception in the second part of ver. 17, which indicates the exercise of a freedom along with the dependence manifested.—*Like them*, ver. 18, equally vain and impotent.—On ver. 19, 20, comp. Ps. cxv. 9–11, cxviii. 2–4. Nothing is peculiar here but the separate mention of the Levites.—The conclusion, ver. 21, alludes to the conclusion of the preceding Psalm. There: he blesses thee out of Zion; here: let him be blessed out of Zion. The praise proceeds from the same place from which the blessing issues. For Zion is the place where the community dwells with God. On the expression: the dweller at Jerusalem, comp. Ps. lxxvi. 2.

PSALM CXXXVI.

The very close agreement of this Psalm with the preceding one is a proof of their having proceeded from the same hand. As the former, so also this seeks to rekindle the hope of the church of God by pointing to the glorious manifestations of God in nature

and history; and the very same facts are selected from history. Peculiar to this Psalm is the repetition in each verse of the general principle: for his mercy endures for ever, which it was sought to impress deeply upon the hearts of the people. There is no proper ground for the supposition, that this repetition was sung by a second chorus of Levites, as of such alternate choruses generally there are no certain traces in the Psalms. According to Ps. cxxxv., the priests, the Levites, and the fearers of God, all took part in the praising of God; and it is most natural to suppose, that the people joined in the repetition. The words of the repetition itself are borrowed from Ps. cxviii. 1, as is also the whole of the first verse.

Ver. 1–3.—Ver. 1. *Praise the Lord, for he is good, for his mercy endures for ever.* Ver. 2. *Praise the God of gods. for his mercy endures for ever.* Ver. 3. *Praise the Lord of lords, for his mercy endures for ever.*—By the mercy of the Lord is specially to be understood his mercy or favour toward his people. Ver. 2 and 3 rest upon Deut. x. 17, "For the Lord your God is the God of gods, and the Lord of lords." The giving of praise thrice is intentional.

Ver. 4–9.—Ver. 4. *Great wonders did he alone, for his mercy endures for ever.* Ver. 5. *Who made the heavens with wisdom, for his mercy endures for ever.* Ver. 6. *Who stretched out the earth above the waters, for his mercy endures for ever.* Ver. 7. *Who made great lights, for his mercy endures for ever.* Ver. 8. *The sun to rule the day, for his mercy endures for ever.* Ver. 9. *The moon and the stars to rule the night, for his mercy endures for ever.*—The reiteration: for his mercy endures for ever, refers, as the commencement shows, to what is always to be supplied: Praise the Lord. It is the thought, which must continually arise when the wonderful works of the Lord are to carry the power of consolation, prophetic import. The mercy of the Lord endures for ever, and as it must perpetually unfold itself anew to his people, when sunk in distress, so all it has done in former times contains a consolatory promise for the future.—*Upon the waters*, comp. on Ps. xxiv. 2.

Ver. 10–15.—Ver. 10. *Who slew the first-born in Egypt, for his mercy endures for ever.* Ver. 11. *And brought out Israel from their midst, for his mercy endures for ever.* Ver. 12.

Through a mighty hand and outstretched arm, for his mercy endures for ever. Ver. 13. *Who divided the Red Sea into pieces, for his mercy endures for ever.* Ver. 14. *And made Israel go through, for his mercy endures for ever.* Ver. 15. *And Pharaoh and his host thrust into the Red Sea, for his mercy endures for ever.*

Ver. 16–22.—Ver. 16. *Who led his people in the wilderness, for his mercy endures for ever.* Ver. 17. *Who slew great kings, for his mercy endures for ever.* Ver. 18. *And killed mighty kings, for his mercy endures for ever.* Ver. 19. *Sihon, king of the Amorites, for his mercy endures for ever.* Ver. 20. *And Og, king of Bashan, for his mercy endures for ever.* Ver. 21. *And gave their land for an inheritance, for his mercy endures for ever.* Ver. 22. *For an inheritance to Israel his servant, for his mercy endures for ever.*

Ver. 23–26.—Ver. 23. *Who in our low estate remembered us, for his mercy endures for ever.* Ver. 24. *And redeemed us from our adversaries, for his mercy endures for ever.* Ver. 25. *Who gives food to all flesh, for his mercy endures for ever.* Ver. 26. *Praise the God of heaven, for his mercy endures for ever.*— Ver. 23 and 24 refer, like the immediately preceding Psalm, Ps. cxv. 12, Ps. cvii. 16, 18, 26, to the redemption from Babylon.— The goodness of God to all flesh, in ver. 25, shows, th t t cannot possibly leave his chosen in humiliation and distress, comp. Ps. civ., where the thought only indicated here, is enlarged upon. Calvin: "At length he extends the fatherly providence of God indiscriminately, not only to the whole human race, but to all animals, so that it might not appear wonderful, he should be so kind and provident a father toward his own elect, since he does not reckon it a burden to provide for oxen and asses, swans and sparrows. Since, therefore, men so far surpass the inferior animals," &c.—The God of heaven, in ver. 26, is the Almighty.

PSALM CXXXVII.

The Psalm falls into three strophes, each of three verses. The two first represent Israel's deep sorrow during the time of their exile from the Lord's land, in which all joyful song was silent;

for how could they well sing and rejoice themselves, at a distance from Zion, the city of their God, with which their whole soul was bound up. The third strophe invokes God's anger upon the authors and instigators of such distress—in the first instance on the hostile, though nearly related people of Edom, then on Babylon, the immediate executrix of the destruction, which had now received the due recompense in her own destruction, but was still destined to receive heavier judgments.

The proper sentiment of the Psalm lies in the last strophe. The two first were only intended to introduce and assign the motive for the wishes and prayers expressed in it.

With the two preceding Psalms this forms a trilogy. Those were designed to inspire the hope of Israel's salvation, this to awaken hope regarding the full execution of judgment upon the enemies, the delay of which would have been not less trying to Israel than that of their own salvation. Both points are very commonly combined together, in particular, in the prophecies of Zechariah, which, as the following investigation will shew, were separated from this Psalm only by the space of a few years.

That the Psalm was sung after the return from Babylon, is evident from the words in ver. 1–3, "we sat, we wept," &c., comp. also in the preceding Psalm, ver. 22 and 24. But we are carried lower down still by another date, the reference to Babylon as the destroyed in ver. 8. Although the first taking of Babylon, under Cyrus, laid the ground of its later complete ruin, yet there was still no destruction properly connected with it. Its walls and gates remained uninjured. It was at the second capture, by Darius Hystaspis, which was effected after a siege of twenty months, probably in the sixth year of Darius, hence eighteen years after the first (see Prideaux Connection B. iii.), that Babylon's hundred gates were laid waste, and her lofty walls prostrated, and that women from other nations had to be brought in as into a depopulated city. It is to this event that the statement must refer. For it was this which properly formed the first and the last destruction. Afterwards the city, of itself, fell more and more, till it sank altogether; comp. Gesenius on Is, i. p. 460.

We have, therefore, a period, *before* which the Psalm could not have been composed. But, on the other hand, we must con-

tinue to stand precisely at this period, and must not descend lower into the times after the exile. We have still before us here the generation that had been in exile. The expressions, indeed, " we sat, we wept," are of themselves not decisive for that, but the whole tone of the Psalm shews, that the speakers are not such as knew of the exile merely by hearsay. The state of exile still appears vividly before the eye of the people, and in the foreground of their contemplations. Still fresh, and not obliterated by any later sufferings, is the thought of what had been suffered at the hands of Edom and Babylon ; and these two, Edom and Babylon, have still not come to the lowest depth of misery, the divine justice has still farther to manifest its retributive dealings toward them. Finally, the general tone, so highly excited and confident, shews, that an event lay in the present—that, namely, to which the predicate: thou destroyed, points—through which the hope of the full execution of the judgment announced by the servants of the Lord was very powerfully quickened.

It is of importance, for the right understanding of this Psalm, as well as of the two preceding, that we should realize the position of things at the beginning of the government of Darius. For the ascertaining of this it will be enough to quote what was said in the Christology on the vision of Zechariah, ch. i. 7–17 : " That the angels are sent to spy out the condition of the earth, and that they return with the answer, that the whole earth is at rest, is designed to symbolize the thought, that it is now time for the accomplishment of the promises in favour of the covenant people, and the threatenings against their enemies. There reigned in the second year of Darius a general peace ; all the nations of the former Chaldean kingdom enjoyed a peaceful and uninterrupted prosperity. Even the Babylonians had again well-nigh recovered from the disadvantages which the capture of their city by Cyrus had brought upon them ; the city continued to be rich and prosperous. Judea alone, the seat of the people of God, presented a mournful aspect ; the capital still lay for the most part in ruins ; no protecting walls surrounded it ; the building of the temple, which had been some months before recommenced, at the exhortation of Haggai, had hitherto been obstructed by difficulties, which the dispirited people despaired of being able to overcome ;

the number of inhabitants was but small, and the greatest portion of the land still lay waste. It required a large measure of faith, under such circumstances, not to doubt either the faithfulness of God to his word, or his omnipotence. His promises to the covenant people had only begun, and that in a small degree, to be fulfilled by their return; his predicted judgments upon Babylon extended farther than to a mere capture of the city, and even this beginning of their fulfilment had apparently ceased, since the city was continually regaining its former prosperity. To counteract the temptations which this state of things necessarily occasioned, and which were fitted to unnerve all theocratic energy, was the object of this prophecy." In the sixth year of Darius the courage of the Israelites was raised by two circumstances; first, the successful termination of the temple building, seventy years after its overthrow, the dedication of which was kept with joy, Ezra vi. 16, then the conquest of Babylon, whereby its entire destruction, as foretold in prophecy, was brought much nearer, seventy years after the destruction of Jerusalem. These two events form the starting-point for this trilogy of Psalms. On the foundation of these does the joyful hope rise, which is expressed in them, respecting the prosperity of Israel, and the execution of judgment on the adversaries. This supposition of itself explains the buoyant and courageous tone by which these Psalms are distinguished from the melancholy and depression that appeared in the decade of Psalms which belong to the period when the building of the temple was interrupted (the nameless pilgrim-songs).

Ver. 1–6.—Ver. 1. *By the water streams of Babylon, there we sat and wept when we thought upon Zion.* Ver. 2. *Upon the willows which are there we hung our harps.* Ver. 3. *For there they who held us captive desired of us words of song, and of our plundered ones joy: "Sing us songs of Zion."* Ver. 4. *How could we sing the song of the Lord in a strange land.* Ver. 5. *If I forget thee, Jerusalem, let my right hand forget.* Ver. 6. *Let my tongue cleave to my gums if I remember not thee, if I do not raise Jerusalem to the top of my joy.*—That Babylon, ver. 1, is not the city, but the kingdom, appears from ver. 2. The streams of Babel are the Euphrates and Tigris, the Chaboras, in the neighbourhood of which the colony resided, in which

Ezekiel laboured, the Ulai or Eulaeus, Dan. viii. 2. The question: why did they sit beside the streams, must neither be disposed of by the remark, that Babylon was a land rich in streams, for it was not this to such an extent that it could simply have been designated from its streams; nor must it be answered by mere conjectures of one kind and another, without any proper ground existing for them in the context. The peculiar reason for the children of Israel being represented as sitting at the streams is the *weeping*. An internal reference of the weeping to the streams, must therefore have been what gave rise to the representation of the sitting. Nor is this reference difficult to be discovered. All languages know of brooks, or streams of tears, comp., in scripture, Lam. ii. 18, "Let tears run down like a river day and night," iii. 48; also Job xxviii. 11, where inversely the gushing of the floods is called weeping. *The children of Israel placed themselves beside the streams of Babel because they saw in them the image and symbol of their floods of tears.* To a certain extent Dan. viii. 2, x. 4, are analogous, as, according to them, Daniel had his vision in great streams, for the ground there also lies, in an internal respect, which the place of abode has to what moves his soul: the great waters are to him—corresponding to the sea in ch. vii. 2—the symbol of masses of people, with the commotion and conflict of which his soul was occupied; comp. on Ps. xlvi. 3, xciii. On the other hand, the passages so often brought into comparison here, of Ez. i. 1, iii. 15, are not similar. For the Chaboras does not come there specially into consideration as the place of prophecy, but the mention of it serves only as a geographical description of the dwelling-place of those among whom the prophet laboured. The שָׁם gives prominence to the place of sojourn. The remembering of Zion is no patriotical one in the ordinary sense; it comes into view, not so much as the civil as the spiritual capital of the people—as the place where the Lord dwelt with his people. To be separated from Zion was to be separated from God, the source of all life and all joy; comp. on Ps. xlii. xliii. How could they avoid weeping, who were shut out of his holy fellowship? God lost, all lost.—The willows, in ver. 2, are mentioned in connection with the streams. The suff. in בְּתוֹכָהּ points to Babylon. The harps are brought into notice as accompaniments of joyful song. (Michaelis: Ci-

thararum olim in solemnioribus gaudiis usus erat, Gen. xxxi. 27; 1 Sam. x. 5; 2 Sam. vi. 5; unde earum cessatio ingentem et publicum luctum describit, Is. xxiv. 8; Ez. xxvii. 13; Apoc. xviii. 22; Job xxx. 31; Lam. v. 15.) This, besides, must render Zion dumb, because, while the church could only there enjoy nearness to her God, this joy forms the condition of every other joy. Whoever robs her of that must henceforth speak no more to her of joy. It sounds like bitter contumely, though it should be meant for good.—The often tortured כִּי, in ver. 3, is not to be limited to the subject of this verse, but extends to ver. 3–6, in the relation they bear to ver. 2: We let our harps repose, for our oppressors desired, indeed, a song from us and music, but we declined giving them it. The שִׁיר already of itself means, not song in general, but song of joy or praise; comp. on Ps. xlii. 8, lxxxiii. supers. Here the more exact import is further determined by the שִׂמְחָה, joy. The cheerful songs are meant which were sung at Zion especially during the feasts. The desiring of such songs is not to be considered as "a scornful demand of the rude conquerors, for the purpose of making sport to themselves." For, in that case, why should they have desired precisely cheerful songs, joy? Plaintive songs would have been still better suited to the purpose; and in the answer no respect is had to such a bad design; only this thought is brought distinctly out in it, that away from Zion they could not sing and enjoy themselves. The desire rather proceeds from the wish, that the Israelites might reconcile themselves to their lot, that they would forget the old and true Zion, which the enemy had taken from them, and would not restore, and would in their imaginations find a new one in Babylon, would feel at home in the land of their banishment. Let one compare how the King of Assyria sought to make the bitter exile sweet to Israel in Isa. xxxvi. 17. The תּוֹלָל is the Chal. form for שִׁרְלָל. This always signifies plundered, imprisoned, comp. at Ps. lxxvi. 5, also Micah i. 8, where the prophet typifies beforehand the fate of the people as led away into captivity—comp. גָּלוֹ in ver. 16. How impossible it is to explain the word here satisfactorily, so long as one proceeds on the groundless supposition, that it has an active signification, is clear from this alone, that not one of all the attempts of this kind have been able to attain to general acceptance. The expressions, "they

who held us captive," and "our plundered," point to the absurdity of the demand, since they desired what their own conduct had rendered it impossible to give. It was not otherwise than if a person should insist upon another singing, whose throat he had already gagged.—Ver. 4–6 contain the answer to the demand of the sons of Babylon, though not addressed to these themselves. We are to supply: But we said. *The song of the* Lord, ver. 4, the joyful, as the Babylonians had desired it, *in the foreign land*, where it rather becomes us to weep, than to sing, as it would imply a renunciation of Zion as our proper spiritual home. The reason for the refusal is given still more plainly in ver. 5, 6, to sing and rejoice in the foreign land were a shameful forgetting of Zion. Accordingly such interpretations as this: such conduct would have been a culpable desecration, are at once to be rejected. No trace also is to be found of such superstition. The Israelites certainly often sung their sacred songs (only not joyful ones) in the foreign land, and an entire series of them was even composed there.—To the words in ver. 5: let my right hand forget, something must be supplied from the context. We are not, therefore, to explain this: let it forget *me*, which besides affords no good sense; but rather, the playing on the stringed instrument, ver. 2, for of this, whether the right hand should be applied to the purpose or not, was the point in question. Then, the punishment also perfectly accords with the misdeed, as in Job xxxi. 22: If I, misapplying my right hand to the playing of joyful strains on my instrument, forget thee, Jerusalem, let my right hand, as a punishment, forget the noble art; and then also ver. 6 fits admirably to what goes before: May my misemployed hand lose its capacity to play, and my tongue, misemployed in singing cheerful songs, its capacity to sing.—The cleaving of the tongue to the gums, ver. 6, as a mark of dead silence, is found also in Job xxix. 10. *If I remember thee not*, singing joyful melodies. The head or summit of joy is, as it were, the chamber, in which Jerusalem was entertained. As to the sense, it formed itself the top, comp. Isa. ii. 2. Some give a constrained meaning: if I do not set Jerusalem higher than my highest joy; ראשׁ in the sense of the best, for worst.

Ver. 7–9.—Ver. 7. *Remember, Lord, to the sons of Edom the day of Jerusalem, who then said: clean off, clean off even to the*

ground for it. Ver. 8. *Daughter of Babylon, thou destroyed one, happy for him, who recompenses to thee thy gifts, which thou has given us.* Ver. 9. *Happy for him, who takes thy little children and dashes them on the stone.*—In respect to the malicious joy of Edom at the destruction of Jerusalem, and its punishment, see the prophecy of Obediah, Lam. iv. 21, 22, Jer. xlix. 7–22, Ez. xxv. 12, ss. Their hatred was the more deserving of recompense, because they were connected by a near tie with Israel. The Lord has now remembered to them for a long time the day of Jerusalem: they have disappeared without leaving a trace behind. The Psalmist only prays for that which the Lord had often declared was to be done, what lay grounded in the eternal laws of the recompensing divine righteousness. (Calvin: "It is to be noted, that the prophet does not here rashly break out into curses and threats, but that he only acts as a divine herald to confirm former predictions.—Now, by the impulse of the spirit, he prays God, that he would shew in reality that the prediction had not been uttered in vain. And when he says, Remember Jehovah, he calls the promise to the recollection of the pious, that persuaded of God's acting the part of an avenger, they would calmly and patiently wait for the issue.") The Pi. of ערה properly, to strip bare. The expression seems to be taken from Hab. iii. 13.—In regard to the proper author of Israel's misery and distress, Babylon (comp. in reference to the: daughter of Babylon, on Ps. xlv. 12), the Psalmist points through the predicate: thou destroyed, to the circumstance, that the beginning of God's vengeance had already laid hold of her, and connects therewith the wish for its completion. At the end of ver. 8 a double point of reflection presents itself. The dashing of the children is the recompense for the gifts, which they had given Israel, and which, according to the eternal laws of divine retribution, must necessarily return upon the giver—comp. Isa. xiii. 16; for the very thing they had done to Israel, they afterwards practised before the eyes of the Psalmist, with inhuman barbarity among themselves, not sparing those who were nearest and dearest to them.[a] Instead of finding fault with the writer, we should rather be

[a] Prideaux Connection B. iii.: "To make their provisions last the longer, they agreed to out off all unnecessary mouths among them; and therefore drawing together all the women and children, they strangled them all, &c."

edified by his energetic acknowledgment of the divine retributive righteousness, which is also taught, precisely as here, by our Lord in Matth. vii. 2. For what is said here is only an individualizing of the sentiment uttered there: "with what measure ye mete, it shall be measured to you again." The most tender human compassion is not excluded by this mode of contemplation. שׁדודה has been greatly tortured, but it can only signify: thou destroyed—not thou spoiler, nor thou to be spoiled; and it refers only to a desolation that had already taken place; not: which I in spirit see as already spoiled, for had that been the meaning, it would have been more pointedly marked. Upon גמל, see on Ps. vii. 4.

We have now in Ps. cxxxviii.–cxlv., a cycle of Davidic Psalms, called forth by David's reflection upon the promise in 2 Sam. vii., and by the anxiety, which filled him, regarding his posterity. In them he accompanies his offspring through their future history, and presents to them the anchor of safety in the storms, which he knew from his own experience certainly awaited them. We have here a prophetic legacy of David, corresponding to his last words in 2 Sam. xxiii. That these Psalms close the series of Davidic Psalms, is certainly not accidental, but is in unison with their internal character, and the time of their composition.

In Ps. cxxxviii., David sets the promise before the eyes of his family. In Ps. cxxxix., he presents to their view, for their consolation and incitement, the all-present God. In Ps. cxl., he brings still more closely to them the circumstances of danger that lay before them. In Ps. cxli., he strengthens them against the internal dangers with which the external necessity threatened them. In Ps. cxlii., cxliii., he shews them how they were to sustain themselves, if matters came to an extremity with them. Ps. cxliv. forms the transition from the prayer-songs to the song of praise, with which in Ps. cxlv. the whole is concluded. There manifestly exists a correspondence between Ps. cxxxviii., the rejoicing on account of the promise of the Lord, and Ps. cxlv., the rejoicing on account of its fulfilment; the lamentations and prayers are inclosed by praise and thanksgivings.

The appropriateness and connection of these Psalms is acknowledged to some extent even by those who have deprived them-

selves of the vantage-ground of the superscriptions. Thus Ewald says of Ps. cxl.–xliii: "a series of songs so similar in matter, and so much of one stamp, that one can hardly doubt that they were the production of the same poet." Koster agrees and adds: "I take them for a supplement of the old Davidic songs. For in place of the liturgical expansive character of the preceding Psalms, we are here at once brought back to the lively alternation of feelings which prevailed in Ps. iii. ss." Hitzig remarks on Ps. cxl.: "The three following Psalms are of a quite similar kind, and appear to have been composed by one author much about the same time."

Seventy-two Psalms of David have gone before. These eight bring up the entire number to eighty. We may perhaps regard Ps. cxxxviii. as the governing castle; and the remaining heptad as divided into three and four. The section would then be marked by the extended superscription of Ps. cxlii.

PSALM CXXXVIII.

The Psalmist, who from the superscription was David, praises the Lord for the high and glorious promise, which in his loving-kindness he had granted him, giving his own faithfulness in pledge for its fulfilment, ver. 1–3; announces that sometime after its fulfilment, all kings of the earth would praise him on account of that promise, ver. 4–6; and, leaning on the promise, utters forth the joyful assurance that he would go on to the very end of the world victorious over all evil, and bringing his enemies under him, ver. 7 and 8.—The Psalm falls into three strophes, the two first of three, the last of two verses, but which together have six members. Ver. 2, which marks the great object of the song, stands prominently out by its great length.

The Psalm belongs to that chain of Davidic Psalms, which was called forth by the promise in 2 Sam. vii., and which rest upon it, Ps. xviii., xxi., lxi., ci.–iii., cx., comp. Ps. lxxii., lxxxix., cxxxii. That the promise here celebrated is no other than that, is clear as day. Here, as well as there, the subject handled has respect to a promise of blessing of surpassing greatness,—the idols, which could exhibit nothing similar, must retreat before it ashamed,

ver. 1; the Lord has glorified himself more by it, than by all his earlier wonders, ver. 2; all kings of the earth will one day praise the Lord on account of it. Farther, here as well as there, we have to do, not with a particular blessing, but with a chain of blessings, which reaches even into eternity, ver. 8. Finally, the promise has here the same subject as there. This is described more pointedly here in ver. 6 and 7: God elevates the oppressed David above all height, revives him in the midst of trouble, brings down all his enemies.

If the Psalm refers to the promise in 2 Sam. vii., there can be no doubt of the correctness of the superscription, which ascribes it to David. For he, on whom the promise has been conferred, himself stands forth as the speaker. It is a proof also of David's authorship, the union, so characteristic of him, of bold courage, see especially ver. 3, and deep humility, see ver. 6. And in proof of the same comes, finally, the near relationship in which it stands with the other Psalms of David, especially those, which likewise refer to the promise of the everlasting kingdom, and with David's thanksgiving in 2 Sam. vii., the conclusion of which: "And now, Lord God, the word which thou hast spoken upon thy servant and upon his house, that fulfil even to eternity, and do as thou hast spoken," remarkably agrees with the conclusion of our Psalm.

In the times when David's race was greatly depressed, this Psalm must have been very consolatory for Israel. It was a pledge to them, that one day this race, and with it the people, would be quickened from death to life.

Ver. 1–3.—Ver. 1. *Of David. I will praise thee with my whole heart, before the gods will I sing praise to thee.* Ver. 2. *I will worship toward thy holy temple, and praise thy name, on account of thy mercy and thy truth; for thou hast made glorious thy word, above all thy name.* Ver. 3. *When I called, thou answeredst me, thou gavest me in my soul proud strength.*—On ver. 1, comp. Ps. xviii. 49, ci. 1, where the ascription of praise refers to the same object; also vii. 17, liv. 7, lvii. 9. The expression: with the whole heart, as in Ps. ix. 1, points to the surpassing greatness of the benefit received, which filled the whole heart with thankfulness, and did not proceed, as it were, from some particular corner of it. Corresponding also, bearing respect

likewise to the greatness of the benefaction, is the expression: before the gods,—demanding of these, whether they would verify their godhead by pointing to any such boon conferred by them on their servants. The benefit which could afford such a demonstration, and give occasion and ground for raillery, must have been a surpassingly great one. The expositions: *before the angels* (LXX. Vulgate), which never bear the name of Elohim, and *before God*, who is directly addressed, and besides throughout the whole Psalm is named Jehovah, are to be rejected. As a proof of the true godhead of the Lord, in contradistinction to idols, the fact in question is also considered by David in his thanksgiving, in 2 Sam. vii. (comp. ver. 22: "The Lord God is great, for no one is like him, and there is no god beside him"), then the frequently used there Jehovah-Elohim, *q. d.* Jehovah, thou who, from the evidence of this fact, and of everything else which thou hast done for Israel, and to which those can point to nothing like (comp. ver. 23, Deut. iv. 7, 34), art alone true God. Against the explanation: before God, is also Ps. cxxxv. 5. That the Psalmist addresses the Lord without naming him, shows, that his whole soul was really full of him.—On the words: I will worship toward thy holy temple, ver. 2, comp. the literally coinciding parallel passage, Ps. v. 7. The latter shows that we are not here to think of heaven. Parallel there is the expression: "I will come into thy house." Loving kindness and truth are here united as in Ps. xxv. 10; the loving-kindness, which the promise guarantees, the truth which will be verified in its fulfilment, and which was already pledged by anticipation; comp. 2 Sam. vii. 28: "Thou art God, and thy words are truth."—*Above all thy name*, above all through which thou hast hitherto manifested thyself. The word of the Lord is his word of promise, comp. Ps. xviii. 30. To make the word glorious, is not simply "to exhibit it as faithful by the fulfilment," but according to Ps. xviii. 50, as much as to confer a glorious promise; comp. the expression, "all this greatness," maximum hoc et summum beneficium, Mich., 2 Sam. vii. 21. It is substantially said thereby, that the bestowal of the promise rises above all the earlier deeds of the Lord among his people, with which the goodness promised to David is also, in 2 Sam. vii. 22 ss., compared. It would be a ridiculous hyperbole, if we were to think of any other promise than that in 2 Sam. vii. In the

prayer of David, in 2 Sam. vii., the singularity of what God had done to him is the principal idea. Luther's translation: for thou hast made thy name glorious above all through thy word, breaks up arbitrarily the connection of כל with שמך, and just as arbitrarily supplies a *through*.—The first number of ver. 3 is to be explained according to the parallel passages, Ps. xxi. 3, 5, lxi. 5, according to which the promise in 2 Sam. vii. was the answer of a prayer to David: he prayed to God, that he might live in his posterity, and this desire was richly fulfilled by God. As the first member marks the fact of the answer, so the second marks more exactly the how: God has filled David's soul with strength and vigour, by the promise of the everlasting supremacy of his seed, and of the protection they should experience against all the assaults of the world. רהב In Hiph., to make proud, עז accus. with power. The high spirit of David is not of such a kind as goes before a fall; for it rests upon God, upon his word and power, comp. Ps. xviii. 29, "By thee I run through troops, and by my God I leap over walls." Luther, who renders: "When I call upon thee, do thou hear me, and give great strength to my soul," has quite mistaken the sense.

Ver. 4–6.—Ver. 4. *All kings of the earth will praise thee, when they hear the words of thy mouth.* Ver. 5. *And sing upon the ways of the Lord, that great is the glory of the Lord.* Ver. 6. *For the Lord is lifted up, and looks upon the lowly, and knows the proud from afar.*—Beside the present praise of a particular king, there is placed here the future praise of all the kings of the earth. What is to be understood by *the words of the Lord*, in ver. 4, is to be determined from ver. 2. Accordingly we are not to think of the doctrine of Jehovah, but of his promise granted to David. That we must not substitute for *the words*, without anything farther, the fulfilment, is self-evident. Still it is only through the fulfilment that the promise makes such an impression upon the kings, only when they were able to compare the history with the prophecy, and had the wonderful faithfulness of the word of God before their eyes. The kings are to be thought of as those who are converted to the service of the true God. This appears from the nature of the subject (from others no such ascription of praise was to be expected); it is expressly declared in ver. 5; and according to other passages also David gives a

clear announcement of the future conversion of all the kings of the earth to the Lord—compare Ps. lxviii. 29, "Because of thy temple at Jerusalem will kings bring presents unto thee; ver. 31, "Princes will come out of Egypt, Ethiopia shall soon stretch out her hands to God," Ps. cii. 15, "And the heathen shall fear the name of the Lord, and all the kings of the earth thy glory," according to which Psalm, it was precisely the fulfilment of the promise given to David, the glorious work of the elevation of the humbled David, which the Lord would employ as the chief means for drawing the hearts of sinners to himself. Accordingly, in the expression in ver. 5: upon the ways of the Lord, entering upon them, the thought is to be thus made out: upon which they will be led by the consideration of this glorious work. The way of the Lord is such a walk as is conformable to his law, and well-pleasing to him. The exposition: And sing of the ways of the Lord, for great is the glory of the Lord, is to be rejected, because verbs of singing never, and verbs also of saying very rarely, are united with ב of the object. It would certainly not have been thought of if the announcement of a future conversion of all kings to the Lord had not been inconvenient. In ver. 6 the lofty elevation of the Lord forms the ground, on account of which he lifts up the lowly, brings down the proud; not: and yet; but: and *therefore*. By the lowly is to be understood such a person, as at the same time feels his lowliness; as also under the proud, he who is such in his own eyes, are to be thought of; comp. Ps. ci. 5. In regard to the thing meant, the lowly is David and his stem, the high is the power of the world lifting itself up against him; comp. ver. 7. For, as the elevation of the lowly David above all his enemies shews, the Lord in his glorious majesty beholds the lowly, whom the world generally regards as forgotten by him, and lifts him up; and eyes the proud from afar, from the distant heights of heaven, into which their pride has driven him, and casts them down; so that the lowly can triumph over them, as the prototype David in respect to Saul. The verse is of a genuine Davidic character; comp. Ps. xviii. 27, "for thou helpest the poor people, and thou bringest down the lofty eyes;" 2 Sam. vi. 22, where David says, "And I will be still less than thus, and will be lowly, שפל, in my own eyes, and with the maidens of whom thou speakest, will I come to honour," Ps. cxxxi. 1.

Ver. 7-8.—Ver. 7. *When I walk in the midst of trouble, thou revivest me; against the wrath of mine enemies thou stretchest forth thy hand, and deliverest me with thy right hand.* Ver. 8. *The Lord will complete for me, Lord thy mercy endures for ever; the works of thy hands thou wilt not forsake.* On the expression: when I walk, in ver. 7, comp. Ps. xxiii. 4. (Calvin already beautifully remarks: "here David declares, how he would trust that God would prove a saviour to him; namely, by restoring life to him when dead, if that should be necessary. It is a passage worthy of being well noted. For, as the flesh is tender, every one would fain preserve his own secure against the darts of evil; hence, nothing more painful, than to fight hand to hand with the enemy in constant danger of death. Nay, as soon as some trouble has risen up in our way, we presently become appalled, as if our difficulties would render all deliverance from God impossible. But this is the true property of faith, in the very darkness of death to behold the light of life, nor only to lean upon the grace of God, as able to rescue us from all that annoys, but as able every moment to quicken us anew in the midst of death. Whence it follows that God exercises his people by a perpetual conflict, so that having one foot in the grave, they may fly for refuge under his wings, and there enjoy tranquillity.") On the expression: thou revivest me, compare Ps. xxx. 3, lxxi. 20. תְּחַיֵּנִי is the second person, as in 2 Sam. xxii. 3, and יְמִינְךָ accus., comp. Ps. xvii. 13, lx. 5. On the first member of ver. 8, compare Ps. lvii. 2, Phil. i. 6. The *beginning* is all that the Lord had hitherto done for David, including the promise imparted to him. The *completing* has its topstone in Christ, in whom David was raised to the supremacy of the world. On the expression: thy mercy or favour endures for ever, comp. 2 Sam. vii. 13, 26, Ps. ciii. 17. *The works* (not the deeds) of *the hands of the Lord*, indicate all that he had till now accomplished for David, from his deliverance from the hand of Saul till the bestowal of the promise. God lets none of his works lie unfinished, least of all one so gloriously begun. As true as he is God he must bring it to a glorious consummation.

PSALM CXXXIX.

God, thou who knowest all things, and art everywhere present, searchest me and knowest me, ver. 1-12. For thou hast formed me, ver. 13–18. Before thee, to whom my heart lies open, I protest that I have no fellowship with the wicked, but that I hate them in my heart, and I pray that thou wouldst keep with me the everlasting favour promised to me, from which I have not excluded myself by any guilt of my own, ver. 19-24. The Psalm falls into four times three pairs of verses.

That the Psalm is not accidentally placed beside the preceding one, that it rather unites with it by an internal connection, appears most distinctly from the relation of the "lead me upon the everlasting way" of the conclusion here, with the "Lord, thy mercy (toward David and his race) endures for ever," at the close of Ps. cxxxviii. Besides, the מרדוק, in ver. 2, also refers back to that Psalm, as do also ver. 9–12; comp. them with ver. 7 there.

If this relation is rightly ascertained, then the view to be taken of the present Psalm is the following. The preceding Psalm praises the Lord on account of the promise of everlasting favour which had been granted to David. Here David comes forth before the Lord, shewing himself here as always deeply penetrated by the conviction, that the righteous alone can partake in salvation, comp. on Ps. xxvi., and protests before him, as the searcher of hearts, that he had not made the promise void through his guilt. David speaks here not merely in his own person, but in that of his whole race; and so the Psalm is an indirect exhortation to his successors on the throne, and, at the same time, to the people, whose predominant spirit was represented in them. The Lord's favour endures for ever—so David exclaims to them—but take good heed that ye allow yourselves in no sin, nor act contrary to the commands of God. For only if ye can comfort yourselves by submitting to the trial of the Omniscient, only if ye can confidently address to him the "search me and know me," can ye hope to have a share in this salvation. If, on the other hand, you are among the wicked, you can never hope to escape the avenging hand of the Almighty, comp. on ver. 7 and 8.

The consideration of the divine omniscience and omnipresence,

however, has not merely this admonitory import, which is the only one commonly brought out by interpreters—(in that point of view Ps. ci. exactly corresponds, and the introduction there ought to be compared; there also the other analogies from the Davidic Psalms are produced)—but it has also a consolatory import; and the overlooking of this has done great harm to the exposition, and led the way to a mistaken view of a series of passages, where it decidedly comes out; comp. especially ver. 9–12, ver. 13–16. The Psalmist grounds upon the declaration: thou searchest me and knowest me, in the conclusion which exhibits the practical result, not merely the prayer, "search me and know my heart," but also the further request, "lead me in the everlasting way." The Omniscient knows not only our guilt and innocence, he knows also the straits of his people. The All-present is not only always at hand with his judgments to chastise the apostate, but also there with his salvation to support the faithful.

There can be no doubt about these two references. But a third, which has been discovered by some, is to be rejected, viz., that David invokes God for judgment on the wicked. Throughout the whole Psalm, and especially at the beginning and the close, which contain the sum, the Psalmist has to do only with himself, and such a turning toward what is without, would have been a violation of its character; the more so as he speaks only of the wicked as such, not of his wicked enemies; ver. 19–22, the verses in which they are mentioned, contain rather a protestation of innocence on the part of the Psalmist, in the form of a renunciation of the wicked, and a declaration of his sincere and cordial hatred toward them.

The Davidic authorship of the Psalm is attested, besides the superscription, the contents, and connection with Ps. cxxxviii., by the various points of contact it presents with the other Psalms of David, and by the depth and original character of the feelings described. An objection has been sought by several in the Chaldaisms that occur, but an explanation is given of these in ver. 6, 17, and 18. Penetrated by the loftiness of his subject, the Psalmist shuns also in the form what is of common and daily use.

Ver. 1–6.—Ver. 1. *To the chief musician, of David. Lord thou searchest me and knowest.* Ver. 2. *Thou knowest my*

sitting down and my rising up, thou understandest my thoughts afar of. Ver. 3. *My way and my couch thou markest, and art familiar with all my ways.* Ver. 4. *For there is not a word upon my tongue, lo, Lord, thou knowest it all.* Ver. 5. *Behind and before thou dost beset me, and layest upon me thy hand.* Ver. 6. *Such knowledge is too wonderful for me, high and I cannot reach it.*—Ver. 1 contains the sum of the whole Psalm. At the word: thou knowest, we are not simply to supply *me*—also in ver. 23, it is not the suffix, but *my heart*, which is found—but all that is here generally to be known, all that belongs to the subject in hand: the expansion of the idea is given in what follows, where the expression, "thou knowest," again returns. For the very purpose of pointing to this relation, the knowing here is left without its object. The matter on which the searching and knowing are employed is not merely the guilt or innocence of the Psalmist, although this comes more immediately into view—comp. in reference to this the parallel passages, Ps. xliv. 21, Job xiii. 9,—but also his position and state: God knows also "the necessities of the soul," "he knows thy pain and domestic sorrows, and the time when to come to thee."—The sitting in ver. 2 denotes rest; the rising up, the raising of one's self to go to work—comp. Ps. cxxvii. 2—*q. d.*, what in a state of rest or of activity, I think, feel, speak, act, and how it goes with me. Understood thus, the mention of the thought in the second member is quite suitable. בין with ל to have insight in regard to something. רע in the signification of thought only here, and in ver. 17; in a third place, often quoted in support of the same, Job xxxvi. 33, it is used in its common acceptation, *friend. Afar off*, according to some, must mean: long before they come into my mind. But that we must rather explain: the far distance between heaven and earth sets no bounds to thy knowledge, is clear from Ps. cxxxviii. 6, and from Jer. xxiii. 23, "Am I a God nigh at hand, saith the Lord, and not a God afar off?" Schmid: "as if being in heaven I should not know the things which are done on earth," comp. ver. 24. David utters here a contradiction against the error of ungodliness seeking to banish God into heaven, as expressed in Job xxii. 12–14, "Dwells not God in the height of heaven? and behold the stars, how high they are. Therefore thou sayest, How doth God know? Can he judge

through the darkness? The clouds are a covering to him, and he seeth not; and he walketh in the circuit of heaven." God's being in heaven is, according to the view of Scripture, no limitation of God, but a designation of his absolute being: not merely *although*, but just *because* God is in heaven, he is not far from every one of us. Calvin: "God is not shut up in heaven, as if he delighted in an idle repose (as the Epicureans feigned), and neglected human affairs, but though we live at a great distance from him, still he is not far from us."—The רבע in ver. 3, is the poetical form of רבץ, reappearing again in the Chaldee. This never signifies the lying, but always the couch, the place of rest. To this also agrees the אֹרַח, not the going, but the way, the poetical expression for the common דֶּרֶךְ used in the second member. My way and my resting-place, for, me as I feel and act on the way and in the place of my rest, what I there do and experience. By the way, also, is not merely to be understood the deeds, but also what happens. זרה, properly, to sift them, poetically, to prove, to know. Luther's translation: thou art about me, is grounded upon the false Rabinical derivation from זֵר crown.—The grounding (for) is given in ver. 4 only by a further expansion. It is only when the preceding context is viewed in a mistaken light, that something higher is found here than there. We must not explain: For there is still no word; but the expression: Lo, Lord, thou knowest it all, rather stands, as Luther correctly perceived, for, which the Lord does not all know.—In ver. 5, the Psalmist already proceeds from the territory of the all-knowing, to that of the all-present—an easy and gentle transition, since, according to the view of Scripture, the omniscience of God is founded in his omnipresence. To the: behind and before, there is supplied from the last member: from above; so that I am on all sides surrounded and environed by thee, can do nothing, and suffer nothing, without being seen by thee, and being always in thy power, either to be punished or assisted.—Before the Psalmist advances farther in the representation, begun in ver. 5, of the divine omnipresence, he breaks out in ver. 6, into admiration of this superhuman glory, so far exceeding even all human conception; comp. Rom. xi. 33. The reading of the text פְּלִאִיָּה is the feminine of פְּלִאִי, wonderful. The Masorites would substitute for this the fem. of the uncertain form פלוא. There is a similar wrong Kri in Judg. xiii. 18. Comp., on the expression:

it is too wonderful for me, Deut. xxx. 11, to which perhaps an allusion is made, and Prov. xxx. 18. The *knowing* must, according to several interpreters, be the divine; but then neither the suffix nor the article would have been used. What is meant is rather, the human knowledge of the divine omniscience and omnipresence, which always infinitely falls short of its infinite object, and worships before it, without being able to penetrate its depth.

Ver. 7–12.—Ver. 7. *Whither shall I go from thy Spirit? And whither shall I flee from thy presence?* Ver. 8. *If I ascend into heaven, thou art there; and if I should make my bed in hell, behold thou art there.* Ver. 9. *Take I the wings of the morning-dawn, would I dwell in the uttermost parts of the sea;* Ver. 10. *Even there would thy hand lead me, and thy right hand hold me.* Ver. 11. *And if I say: Surely the darkness shall crush me, then at night was the light about me.* Ver. 12. *Even the darkness darkens not before thee, and the night shines as the day; darkness is as the light,*—Ver. 7 and 8 cut off all hope of deliverance from the sinner, by pointing to the omnipresence of God. The thought is to be supplied: If I had cause to fear thy judging eye, and thine avenging hand, and to hide myself from them. Amos ix. 2 is to be compared: "If they (the sinners) should break through into hell, there will my hand take them; if they climb up to heaven, thence will I bring them down." The Spirit of the Lord is his power and presence operating in the world; comp. on Ps. cvi. 33, the history of the creation, and Ps. xxxiii. 6. Incorrectly some: the Spirit who knows all things. רוּחֶךָ Is denom. from יָצוּעַ, to make a couch, bed, or something for a bed; precisely as here in Is. lviii. 5, and the Hiph. Is. xiv. 11, Esther iv. 3, comp. Ewald § 122. The accus. שְׁאוֹל finds in this an obvious explanation. Job. xxvi. 5, 6 is to be compared. On ver. 9, 10, comp. Ps. lv. 6, 8: "Oh that I had wings like a dove, then would I fly away and abide. Lo! I would fly far off, I would lodge in the wilderness. I would make haste to a refuge from the strong wind, from the tempest." This very similar passage shews, that we are not to think of a desire of being at a distance from God as the motive for flight, but the desire of escaping from the enemies. To the same result also are we conducted by the expression: "thy hand will lead me," under which we can think

only of a friendly leading; compare Ps. lxxiii. 24, xxiii. 3, v. 8, xxvii. 11, &c., and of this Ps. ver. 24. (Falsely, therefore, many: manus tua, ex qua elabi conarer.) The right hand also is to be regarded as that which is ready to help, comp. Ps. xviii. 16. That in both members: thy hand will lead me, and: thy right hand will hold me, God's omnipresence is applied for the consolation of the helpless, apparently quite excluded from his aid, yet still, wherever he may be, secure within the territory of God, still farther appears quite clearly from the reference which they carry to ver. 7 of the internally related Ps. cxxxviii.: "Against the wrath of mine enemies do thou stretch forth thy hand, and deliver me with thy right hand." Hence ver. 7, where the Psalmist speaks of his fleeing from the presence of God, belongs not to the whole section, ver. 7–12, but only to ver. 8, with which it is united into a pair. The morning-dawn is brought here into notice in respect to the speed with which its rays dart from one end of the earth to the other. Such extraordinary means needed to be called into requisition, in order to reach the distant end, that could not be attained in the common way. It is better to translate: take I (comp. the *had I* in Ps. lv. 6) than lift I, with comparison of Ezek. x. 16, 19. In order to lift up wings, one must still first have them. The uttermost parts, the ends of the sea, are at the same time the ends of the earth. As the furthest point in the breadth, stands here in connection with the furthest depth and the furthest height in ver. 8, for the purpose of expressing the thought, that in the whole universe there is no point where God is not present. The usage, according to which יָם also means the western regions, is not to be thought of.—Ver. 11 and 12 become plain, as soon as we adhere, in the explanation of וישופני itself to the more certain usage, and are not driven hither and thither after conjectural meanings. שׁוּף signifies, in the two other passages where it occurs, Gen. iii. 15, Job. ix. 17, unquestionably to bruise, and this signification, which the LXX. (*καταπατήσει*) and the Vulgate (conculcabit) retain also here, will be found quite suitable, when we do not miss the proper interpretation of the two preceding verses, and are not led generally to suppose, that the Psalmist had in view only a one-sided application of the divine omnipresence. The darkness is here brought into consideration, not as a sort of covering for the heart and actions of

men from the presence of God, or from his avenging hand, as in Job xxxiv. 21, 22, Jer. xxiii. 24, but as exposing to danger, from being that in which robbers and murderers execute their designs. Besides darkness in this natural sense, respect is also had to darkness in the very common figurative sense; comp. Is. l. 10, "Whoever walks without light, let him trust upon the name of the Lord, and stay himself on his God;" so that the words in Ps. cxxxviii. 7, "When I walk in the midst of trouble," are quite parallel. Thine all-seeing eye, thine almighty hand, is at work also in the deepest darkness, where no human eye penetrates, no human hand avails: Thou, the all-present, to whom the contrasts of heaven and earth, earth and hell, one's settled home and the end of the earth, import nothing, so neither do the contrasts of light and darkness. Thou art with me when I walk through the valley of death-darkness, and deliverest me from it. What is generally found in the passage in a direct manner may certainly be deduced from it. If helpless innocence, veiled in darkness, is not concealed from God, neither assuredly can guilt be so, when attempting to hide itself in darkness. אַךְ, only, has here the import of a strengthening particle, comp. Ps. lviii. 11, lxviii. 7, 22. It points to this, that the crushing power of darkness appears to stand as a thing beyond all doubt. Luther renders the second member: so must the night become also light about me. But according to ver. 9 and 10 the minor is more properly begun at ver. 12. The light about me, the light that encircles me for my protection. Upon וַחֲשֵׁךְ, in ver. 12, always to make dark, to darken, never to be dark (Luther: even darkness is not darkness to thee) comp. on Ps. cv. 28. *Before thee*, so that thou couldst not see through it. In reference to the double ךָ at the end, see Ew. § 347.

Ver. 13-18.—Ver. 13. *For thou hast my reins in thy power thou wert over me in my mother's womb.* Ver. 14. *I praise thee on this account, that I am greatly distinguished; wonderful are thy works, and that my soul well knows.* Ver. 15. *My strength was not hid from thee, when I was made in secret, when I was woven in the depths of the earth.* Ver. 16. *Thine eyes saw me, when I still was unprepared, and in thy book were they all written, the days which were still to be, and of which none then was.* Ver. 17. *And how precious are to me, O God, thy*

thoughts, how great is their sum! Ver. 18. *I will number them, there is more of them than the sand, I awake and am still with thee.*—The *for* in ver. 13 does not refer specially to what immediately precedes, but to the fundamental thought which pervades the whole section, ver. 1-12: thou searchest and knowest me. This is proved by the fact that man already belongs to God from the first beginnings of his existence, that God glorifies himself in his first formation, and has even then pre-arranged all his destiny. How could such a being be strange to God! How could his heart be hidden from him! or his troubles be unknown, indifferent, or accidental! It appears that the: *for thou*, here refers back to the *thou* in ver. 2. The reins are known as the seat of the desires and feelings, the region where sinful passion boils, and where pain also plants its seat. This region God has in his power as the creator of man, as is more fully declared in what follows, and so nothing can be concealed from him which passes in this secret workshop. קָנָה always signifies to possess, to hold possession of, never to make. תְּסֻכֵּנִי is rendered: thou hast covered or protected me, by the LXX., Vulg. Pesch.; Luther: thou wast over me. It is commonly translated now: thou hast woven me, with comp. of Job. x. 11. But סָכַךְ signifies always to cover, and, what is decisive, it is used thus in the closely-related following Psalm, ver. 8. This signification is quite suitable here also. The covering and protection consists, according to what follows, in the oversight and protection, which is exercised by God in regard to the germ of life, which is perfectly impotent in itself. How could he, who had manifested these, be indifferent and careless in respect to the work of his hands, comp. Ps. xxii. 9, Job x. 12. Let him, whom sinful lust or despair in regard to God's omniscence and omnipresence would cause to err, ascend to the original of his being, and he will be ashamed of himself, and reverently adore.—Ver. 14 does not form a sort of side-thought, but the more glorious the formation of man is, so much the stronger the proof of God's absolute omniscience and omnipresence, so much the more striking the testimony it furnishes against those who abandon themselves to sin, under the idea that God sees not and judges not, or surrender themselves to despair, saying: My way is hidden from God, Job x. 9-11. The roots פָּלָא and פָּלַח are never interchanged, comp. on Ps. iv. 3, xvii. 7, but they

are nearly related both in form and meaning. נוראות found also in David's mouth in Ps. lxv. 5, 2 Sam. vii. 23, and elsewhere, is used here adverbially, as נפלאות in Job xxxvii. 5. עצם in ver. 15 undoubtedly signifies *strength* in the two other places where it occurs, and is there also in the female form. This meaning is therefore to be retained also here. But: my strength, is a poetical expression, for: my bones or skeleton, עֶצֶם, so named from the strength connected with it, with the addition perhaps of the sinews, which, together with the bones, make up the strength of the body—comp. Job. x. 11, "with bones and sinews hast thou interwoven me." It was not hidden from thee, for thou hast prepared it for me, since thou hast woven me together with bones and sinews. By *the depths of the earth* Sheol is indicated, comp. Ps. lxiii. 9. As no trace is to be found of the pre-existence of man in Sheol, as here also the subject discoursed of is the bodily formation of man, while to the Sheol could belong in that case only the soul, and the Psalmist, finally, has to do here only with what took place in his mother's womb, there must, therefore, be supposed an abbreviated comparison: in a place, so dark and concealed as the depths of the earth. Similar is Job i. 21, "Naked came I out of my mother's womb, and naked shall I return to it again," in a state resembling the former. As the point of comparison in the parallel: in the hidden, is expressly announced, the assertion is to be rejected, that the comparison points "to the region of the dead as to the womb of a resurrection-life." גלם in ver. 16 of the still unformed embryonic mass. The suff. in גלמי is used by way of anticipation, and refers to the days. If this should appear too hard to any one, he can with Hupfeld understand by גלם, the ball of the thread of life, and to this refer the suffix. For, the other constructions are too violent and constrained. The יצר (here Pü) is elsewhere also often used of the divine pre-determination, as contrasted with its execution and its actual introduction. The days are brought into consideration here partly in respect to themselves, compare Job xiv. 5, "Seeing his days are determined, the number of his months is with thee," partly also in respect to the events which they contain for men, comp. Ps. lvi. 8. *And there was not one among them*, the days pre-determined by thee. It is not worth while to inquire what the Masorites meant by their Kri, לו. The consolatory tendency of

the Psalm comes here distinctly out. If our whole being is by God pre-arranged, how then can any thing befal us, which he has not in his hand, which he does not see, or in regard to which he is unable at the proper time to administer help to us?—The thoughts of God in ver. 17 are of him, as the searching and knowing, judging and helping in regard to all that lives upon the earth. In reference to the expression: *precious* = glorious, comp. on Ps. xlv. 9, xxxvi. 7: "How precious (glorious) is thy goodness, O God"—one of the passages very nearly related to this, the more so, as among the thoughts, the saving and helping have here also an important place. Against the explanation: how precious, how hard to be reached, how difficult are they, the parallelism already decides. Of the four members of the two verses, ver. 2 and 3, 1 and 4 correspond, as Ewald has excellently remarked. In the second member of ver. 18 the Psalmist does not praise his zeal in maintaining fellowship with God, and meditating upon his thoughts, but the glorious riches of these thoughts themselves, which so chain him, that he cannot isolate himself from God, that God is not merely his thought by day, but also his dream by night. A thinking, which is not interrupted even by sleep, which renders dreams also of service, must be stirred by some mighty object. Ps. xvi. 7 and lxiii. 6 are related.

Ver. 19-24.—Ver. 19. *If thou only killest, God, the wicked, and ye men of blood depart from me.* Ver. 20. *Those who name thee for crime, bear away for lies as thine enemies.* Ver. 21. *Shall I not hate, Lord, thy haters, and abhor those that rise up against thee?* Ver. 22. *I hate them in right earnest, they are enemies to me.* Ver. 23. *Search me, God, and know my heart, try me and know my thoughts.* Ver. 24. *And see if there be with me any way of trouble, and lead me in the way of eternity.* As the אִם in ver. 19 is not a particle of desire, compare at Ps. lxxxi. 9, there is to be supplied: it will be agreeable to me, I will cordially praise thee, or something similar. That the Psalmist declares himself content with the overthrow of the wicked, shews how little he participates in their feeling, and prepares the way for the confident demand: Search me, God, and know my heart, in ver. 23. *Men of blood*, a common expression with David, comp. v. 6, xxvi. 9, lv. 23, passages which have only to be looked at to see what

should be made of the remark: "Men of blood, on account of their libations of blood." On the words: depart from me, *q. d.*, get you away, I have nothing to do with you, we are not to comp. Ps. vi. 8, cxix. 115, but Job xxi. 14: "And they (the wicked) say unto God, depart from us," and Matth. vii. 23. Luther falsely: And the blood-thirsty must depart from me, as if the Psalmist called in God's help against the wicked, through which the whole train of thought in the Psalm is destroyed. In ver. 20 ימרוך is from אמר, with the dropping of א, as in 2 Sam. xix. 14. *They who speak to thee*, with poetical boldness, for, they who use thy name—comp. xl. 11. That we must explain: for crime, for the promotion of that, not criminally (Luther: slanderously) appears from the second member. In this member, נשוא is put by a poetical transposition for נשואו, comp. Ps. viii. 7. It unquestionably rests upon Ex. xx. 7, to which also Ps. xxiv. 4 alludes: thou shalt not bear the name of the Lord to a lie, that is, thou shalt leave it unmixed with lies, not use it for the confirmation of a lie—comp. on Ps. xxiv. Accordingly the suffix is here to be supplied from the first member, bear *thee* away for lying and deceit. The two members stand in the same relation to each other, as the two members of Ps. xxiv. 4; only that the position there is an inverse one: who does not bear away his soul to a lie, and swears not to deceit. *As thine enemies* (the עֵר enemy in 1 Sam. xxviii. 16, and Dan. iv. 16, not Isa. xiv. 21), for every one is an enemy of the Lord, who mixes him up with sin, and degrades him into the means of compassing his bad ends. Luther's translation: and thine enemies raise themselves without cause, is dissipated by the one consideration, that נשא never signifies to raise one's self. Besides, there is naturally only one particular manifestation brought out here of the corruption of the wicked, in order to characterize them as such.—The expression: shall I not hate, in ver. 21, presents the hatred as something entirely natural to the true servant of God, a thing to be understood by him of itself, and consequently a necessary mark of a gracious state; *q. d.*, how could I do otherwise than hate them? Calvin: "When he says that the despisers of God were hateful to him, he vindicates by this eulogium his own integrity, not because he was himself free from all failings, but because, devoted to the cultivation of piety, he thoroughly adhorred all impiety. For never does the

love of piety sufficiently flourish in our hearts, unless it begets in us a hatred of crimes, such as David here declares. Then, if that zeal for the house of God burns in us, of which David speaks in Ps. lxix. 9, it will be inexcusable coldness in us, if we tacitly allow not only his righteousness to be violated, but also his sacred name to be insolently trodden under foot by the wicked? Upon תקומם, abbreviated from מתקומם, comp. Ewald § 160, *a*.—In ver. 22 Luther translates quite erroneously: therefore are they hostile to me, instead of: therefore are they enemies to me, I judge and consider them as such; because they are God's enemies, they are also mine; which alone suits the connection.—With such feeling, as he has expressed in ver. 19–22, with such hearty abhorrence of the wicked and in respect to them, the Psalmist can call upon God, by way of consolation, to search and prove him, even to the lowest depths of his heart, ver. 23. He knows that this inquisition and trial, to which at all events he is subject, and which he cannot escape, ver. 1, will establish for him a favourable result. —עצב, ver. 24, means heavy work, so in Isa. xlviii. 5: my work, for the idols, which I have laboriously made; parallel: my carved work, and my graven work—the trouble, pain. The way of pain is the way, which leads to pain. Such a way of pain, a painful course and manner of life, including what is experienced as well as done, belongs to those whose heart departs from the living God, and who walk in the wickedness of their heart, comp. Ps. xvi. 4. The Psalmist had no reason to apprehend such a way, so far as the passage, ver. 19–22, contains the language of truth. The contrast to the way of pain forms *the way of eternity*—the way that leads to eternity. There is an allusion to the close of the preceding Psalm: Lord, thy favour (toward me) endures for ever; *q. d.* upon the way, which leads to the blessed eternity promised me by thee (the endless continuance and prosperity of the Davidic stem and kingdom), which I have not lost through any guilt of mine.

PSALM CXL.

The Psalm is composed of five verses as the beginning, and five as the conclusion. It is twice divided by three and two. In the

middle a strophe of three verses, the proper heart of the Psalm, distinguished by the use of the name Jehovah four times, which, with the occurrence of it thrice in the beginning and the conclusion, make altogether seven times.

Ver. 2–6 represents in two onsets after a short prayer the wickedness of the enemies, and the danger which threatened the Psalmist from them. The middle strophe, ver. 7–9, presents the distress to God. The conclusion declares in two applications the firm hope of the Psalmist regarding the overthrow of the enemies, and the deliverance of the oppressed. The beginning and the conclusion, the distress and the deliverance, together make up the number ten.

The authorship of David is attested, not only by the superscription, but also by the dependance manifested throughout on the Psalms of David, and only on these, in connection with a vigorous originality, which does not admit of deriving this dependance from mere imitation; it rather arises from the striving of David to direct and bring all earlier brooks of consolation and support into one bed. That the Psalm stands in close connection with those around it, that it also refers to the future destinies of David's seed, is clear from this, that it has in common with them the strong compression of speech, the predilection for rare words, and generally a more elevated tone, as also several peculiarities; and, besides, from the mention of war in ver. 2, and the martial preparation in ver. 7, which excludes a reference to merely private circumstances.

After having placed before the eyes of his struggling posterity the great promise, and therein presented them with the true anchor for the storm, Ps. cxxxviii., David had further in Ps. cxxxix. conducted them, both for their admonition and their comfort, into the presence of the all-seeing and ever-present God. Now, he brings them into nearer contact with the prospective circumstances, sets before their eyes the frightful danger, which threatened from their enemies, and teaches them to view these as in the light of God.

Just as here David triumphs also in 2 Sam. xxiii. 6, 7, over the future enemies of his seed and kingdom foreseen in the Spirit, and besides this Psalm the following also rest upon the presupposition of heavy trials and dangers awaiting the kingly house and kingdom, viz., Ps. xviii., and the two trilogies, Ps.

ci.–ciii. (comp. Introd. cii.) and Ps. cviii.–cx. Whoever is exercised with the cross as David was, and has had such experiences of the malice of men, he can never abandon himself, in regard to the future prospects of his race, to fantastical illusions of a perpetually untroubled prosperity, it will be a matter of satisfaction to him if only the Lord will bring all to a glorious issue at last.

The old opinion, that the Psalm refers to the relation between David and Saul, has a certain measure of truth for its foundation. David has here, as also in Ps. cix., borrowed the colours from this relation: in Saul, the most powerful and malignant enemy of the past, he beholds the type of the future enemies of his seed. We find, in particular also here a strong emphasis upon calumny and false accusations, which is characteristic of the Sauline Psalms. Besides, it is precisely from these Psalms that this Psalm more especially borrows.

To the Chief Musician, a Psalm of David.—Ver. 1–5.—Ver. 1. *Redeem me, Lord, from wicked men, from the man of violent deeds defend me.* Ver. 2. *Who meditate evil in their heart, every day they gather themselves for wars.* Ver. 3. *They sharpen their tongues like serpents, the poison of adders is under their lips. Selah.* Ver. 4. *Preserve me, Lord, from the hands of the wicked, from the man of violent deeds defend me, who purpose to overthrow my goings.* Ver. 5. *The lofty conceal gins and cords for me, they spread out the net on the way, they lay traps for me.*—The man of violent deeds, in ver. 1, is an ideal person, as also in Ps. xviii. 48: "from the man of violent deed (in 2 Sam. xxii. 49, as here, the stronger plural, חמסים) deliver thou me." Still, the Psalmist there, and probably also here, has Saul especially in his eye, who was the type of all the future enemies of David, as he was also the most formidable and malignant of the past. In Psalm lii., for example, the character of Saul is drawn in a quite similar manner, to the character of the man of violent deeds here. On תנצרני, compare Ps. xii. 8. גור in ver. 2, in the sig. to gather themselves, as in Ps. lvi. 6, lix. 3. The other explanations are to be rejected on the ground alone of these two parallel passages, which, in a Psalm like the present, are of special weight. The rendering: raise themselves up = גרה is, besides, not grammatically certain; and the explanation: they inhabit war, for they are constantly in it, is not na-

tural, and also without analogies. מלחמות, accus., for wars, is used only of wars in the proper sense, not of altercations.—In the first member of ver. 3, the parallel passage, Ps. lxiv. 3: "who sharpen their tongue like a sword," shews that we must not explain: as the serpent sharpens its tongue; but only: with like venom as the serpent, as, indeed, this point of comparison is expressly mentioned in the second member. Comp. regarding it Ps. lviii. 4. Peculiar here is only the עכשוב, which does not occur elsewhere. On the expression: under their lips, comp.: under his tongue, in Ps. x. 7.—The beginning of the second onset, in ver. 4, is marked, not only by the preceding Selah, but also by its repeating the beginning of the first, with only some small deviations. On the last member, comp. Ps. lvi. 13.—*The lofty*, in ver. 5, points back to Ps. cxxxviii. 6. The image of the *net* and of the *pit* is particularly dear to David, comp. Ps. xxxi. 4, lvii. 6, lxiv. 5, cxlii. 4. The heaping up of so many names here serves to bring together all that had formerly been said and complained of regarding hostile plots. David sees the past, with its horrors, reviving again in the future. But the past has also taught him, where the help is to be found.

Ver. 6–8.—Ver. 6. *I said to the Lord: thou art my God; hear, Lord, the voice of my crying.* Ver. 7. *The Lord God is my salvation-strength; thou coverest my head in the day of armour.* Ver. 8. *Grant not, Lord, what the wicked desires; yield not to him his will, they will lift up themselves. Selah.*—The first member of ver. 6 is taken verbatim from Ps. xxxi. 14. In the first member there, literally: I trust upon the Lord. On the second member comp. Ps. v. 1, xxviii. 2, 6.—On the first member of ver. 7, comp. Ps. lxii. 1, 11. *My salvation-strength*, upon which I, in myself impotent, ground all my hope of salvation. On the expression: thou coverest—the preterite marks the past stretching into the future—comp. Ps. v. 11, cxxxix. 13. The *head*, because there the stroke is deadly, comp. 1 Sam. xxviii. 2, and Ps. lx. 7. The day of armour is the day of battle.—On the first member of ver. 8, comp. Ps. xxvii. 12: "Give me not over to the will of mine enemies." On זממו comp. Ps. xxxi. 14, xxxvii. 12. On the expression: they shall lift or elevate themselves, comp. Ps. lxvi. 7, and, as regards the matter, Deut. xxxii. 27.

Ver. 9–13.—Ver. 9. *The head of those that compass me about —the injury of their lips will cover them.* Ver. 10. *Burning coals will be thrown upon them, into the fire will he precipitate them, into water-floods, that they rise not up again.* Ver. 11. *The man of the tongue, will not prosper in the land, the man of wicked violence, he will pursue him, thrust upon thrust.* Ver. 12. *I know, the Lord maintains the right of the poor, the judgment of the needy.* Ver. 13. *Surely the righteous will praise y name, the upright shall dwell before thy face.*—In ver. 9, the head of the enemies, with its *destructive* covering, forms the contrast to the head of the Psalmist, with its covering of loving-kindness, in ver. 7. To bring prominently out this contrast, the ראש is placed first in the nomin. absol. מסבי is plural of מָסָב, surrounding, which is determined here by the connection to be a hostile one, comp. 2 Kings xxiii. 5; it is not the partic. in Hiph.; for this has a transitive meaning, comp. Jer. xxi. 4. *The injury of their lips* is the injury which they sought to inflict by their calumnious malice. Ps. vii. 16 is exactly parallel. In the last word the reading of the text is יְכַסְּמוּ without iod. The vau only serves the purpose of drawing attention to the marginal note, which gives the regular form, according to the rule of Hiller: Joth medianum in altera lectione quiescens post chirec aut tzere, in altera defectum, in symbolo vel in vau convertitur vel transponitur, comp. on Ps. lxxiv. 11.—ימיטך, in ver. 10, they bend, for, one bends, or throws down, comp. Ps. lv. 3, occupies, as very often happens, the place of the passive, which is substituted on the margin. *Coals*, comp. Ps. xviii. 12, 13. While, in the first member only, the punishment itself is represented, in the second the author of it, the Lord, is distinctly mentioned. *Deep waters* are suitably placed beside the *fire*, comp. Ps. lxvi. 12, Is. xliii. 2. מדמרות, which occurs only here, is to be explained, by comp. with the Arabic, of such, and not of deep pits in the earth, with Luther and others.—The counterpart to the *man of the tongue*, in ver. 11, is formed by the man of wicked violence, and by means of this counterpart, the tongue is more nearly characterized as malignant. On this account alone רע must not, in respect to the accents, be separated from חמס. On the expression: he will not prosper, comp, Ps. ci. 7, cii. 28. The subject in יצודנו is the Lord, as also in יפלם in ver. 10, comp. Ps. xxxv. 6.—On

ver. 12 comp. Ps. ix. 4. Calvin: "All now think me miserable, because, while exposed to the pleasure of wicked men, I am not immediately rescued by the hand of God. I do not, however, abandon myself to despair; because I know it to be the part of God to undertake the cause of the poor."—On the expression: with thy face, in ver. 13, comp. Ps. xvi. 11, lxi. 7.

PSALM CXLI.

The Psalmist entreats from the Lord power to withstand the internal dangers with which he was threatened from the assaults of a hostile world, the temptation which pressed upon him to murmur against God and his providential dealings, and to pass over into the path of prosperous sinners, ver. 1–4. In ver. 5–7 he brings to his recollection the reasons which might fortify him against such a temptation: what he had hitherto suffered was the gracious and gentle chastisement of a righteous God, and in his time the wheel will turn, the enemies be appointed to destruction, the death of the Psalmist change into life. Finally, in ver. 8–10, he prays that the Lord would bring such hopes into fulfilment, by giving deliverance to him, and overthrowing the enemies.

The whole is completed in the number ten, which falls into seven, divided by four and three, and three. The name Jehovah is thrice used.

The superscription, which ascribes the Psalm to David, is confirmed by the close affinity it bears to the Psalms of David in connection with undoubted originality. The pregnant brevity of the language extorts, even from De Wette, the confession: "I consider it, with Ps. x., to be one of the oldest." That the Psalm, like the whole cycle to which it belongs, refers to greater relations than those of a private individual, is evident from the expressions, "their judges," and "our bones," in ver. 6 and 7. It is also fitly assigned to this cycle on the ground, that ver. 9 and 10 connect themselves with the preceding Psalm, while ver. 6 refers to Ps. cxxxviii. 4; and, lastly, on account of the predilection peculiar to this cycle for rare words and unusual forms

The centre of the Psalm is formed by ver. 3 and 4, especially the latter, to which also its disproportionate length already points. David would fortify his successors upon the throne, and their people, against the strong inward temptations which the coming cross was sure to bring with it, temptations which had pressed hard upon himself during the troubled past, and the danger of which he well knew from his own experience.

Ver. 1–4.—Ver. 1. *A Psalm of David. Lord, I cry to thee, make haste to me, give ear to my voice when I cry to thee.* Ver. 2. *Let my prayer prosper before thee as the incense, the heaving of my hands as the evening meat-offering.* Ver. 3. *Set, Lord, a guard to my mouth, keep the door of my lips.* Ver. 4. *Incline not my heart to an evil thing, to commit deeds in wickedness with evil doers, and let me not eat of their dainties.*— Ver. 1 and 2 form the introduction, not to the whole Psalm, but to ver. 3 and 4. For only there are purposes concealed behind the prayer, of which the second member of ver. 2 speaks. To the same result conducts also the formal division of the Psalm, according to which, ver. 1 and 2 are closely united to ver. 3 and 4, while they would form a strophe by themselves as an introduction to the whole Psalm. On the expression: I cry to thee, ver. 1, comp. xvii. 6. On the expression: make haste to me, which shews that the temptation against which the Psalmist prays for support in ver. 3 and 4, which lay heavy upon him, and even in idea was ready to overwhelm him, comp. Ps. xxii. 19, lxx. 2, lxxi. 12. On the words: give ear to my voice, Ps. cxl. 6; and on: for I cry to thee, iv. 1.—תכון, in ver. 2, is to be taken, after Ps. cxl. 11, in the sense of: let it prosper. We must not explain as an incense-offering, but as (spiritual) incense, spiritual frankincense. The smoking, sweet smelling incense is in scripture the standing symbol of the prayer of believers, which is precious before God—comp. Apoc. v. 8, viii. 3, 4, Luke i. 10. The Psalmist comes forth here as an expositor of the Mosaic law, in which the offering of incense every morning and evening (Ex. xxx. 7 ss.) symbolized prayer, and reminded the faithful of their obligation to present it, and the blessing which arises from it. He who prayed brought to the Lord the substance of this incense-offering. With the presentation of the true incense he connects that of the true meat-offering.

The meat-offering, the nourishment presented to the Lord by his people, is in the law the symbolical representation of good works, which were thus exhibited as objects of desire, and commendation for God's people, comp. Ps. xl. 7. A heart, disposed to good works, the Psalmist presents to the Lord, in ver. 3 and 4, where he prays for power to perform such, for preservation from the deceitfulness of sin. משאת כפי is now commonly understood, after the example of Luther, of the lifting up of the hands as a jesture in prayer, but we must rather explain: the heaving or the offering, the gift of my hands. The signification of present or offering, for משאת is perfectly certain; and is the rather to be retained here, as מנחה has also originally the same signification, and as משאת is specially used of the gift of food, which one man presented to another, Gen. xliii. 34, 2 Sam. xi. 8. The mincha was such a gift of food. The signification: the lifting up, never elsewhere occurs, and from the form alone the word could scarcely have that meaning. Finally, it is a decisive matter-of-fact ground, that the lifting up of the hands, prayer, has nothing to do with the meat-offering. The question is asked, why the meat-offering of the *evening* should here in particular be named. This question is often quite falsely answered, in particular by those, who with Kimchi suppose, that the Psalm was intended to be sung in the evening, in opposition to the character of this whole Psalm-cycle, which excludes the idea of such specialities. We are guided into the right track by the fact, that whenever, excepting in the Pentateuch, the meat-offering is more exactly determined, it is only the evening one that is named—comp. 1 Kings xviii. 29, 36, where it is carefully to be remarked, the evening meat-offering is simply named the meat-offering. Dan. ix. 21, Esra ix. 4, 5. A farther light is afforded by 2 Kings xvi. 15: "And the king Ahaz commanded Urijah, the priest, and said, Upon the great altar present the burnt-offering of the morning, and the meat-offering of the evening." Hence, it would seem, that the burnt-offering was regarded as having the most prominent part in the morning sacrifice, with the meat-offering only as an appendage, so that the whole was named from the burnt-offering, while, on the other hand, in the evening sacrifice the meat-offering was regarded as having the chief-place—good works had rightly their first-place assigned them at the end of the day—and the whole

named from it. Accordingly, the meat-offering of the evening here does not form a contrast to the meat-offering of the morning, but it occupies the place of the meat-offering generally.—In ver. 3 the Psalmist prays for preservation from the danger of sinning in *word*, which the temptation brought with it; and in ver. 4 from that of sinning in *deed*. Ps. xxxix. 1, and what was said there, form a commentary on ver. 3. The subject is not, as Calvin and others suppose, respecting hard speeches against the enemies, but of impatient, irreverent complaints against God, a quarrel with him, an expression of doubt respecting his power, righteousness, and grace. The reasons, which ought to have prevented him from making such complaints against God, to which the human heart is much inclined the conviction that the sufferings were a deserved and fatherly chastisement, the propsect that the wicked would at the proper time come to a frightful end, while his sufferings would bear a rich harvest of joy, these things are brought to remembrance by the Psalmist in ver. 5–7. שמרה, only here, guard, נצרה, the imperat. in Kal with He parag., and Dagesh euphon., as in Prov. iv. 13. דל is only here used for דלת, gate, (comp. Mic. vii. 5: keep the doors of thy mouth.) Frequently in poetry the masculine form is employed in place of the otherwise common feminine, and reversely, as presently in ver. 9 מקשות. We must not conclude from the poetical employment of such forms, that they were in current use. The same freedom is also taken by the poets with verbs in forming conjugations not found elsewhere; for example, the Hithpo. in ver. 4, comp. on Ps. xviii. 26. On the expression: incline not, in ver. 4, comp. on Ps. cxix. 36. Weakening and evacuating the import, many render it: do not permit it to be inclined, suffer it not to be prone. With the obstinately wicked, God actually inclines the heart to evil things, though the guilt always remains with themselves and their perverse wills. The heart is named as the source of actions. The subject is the heart here, as in the preceding verse it is the words. Under the "evil thing," and "deeds in wickedness," we must not think specially of revenge against his enemies. The comparison of numerous parallel passages in the Psalms, for example Ps. xxxvii., xlix., lxxiii., and the consideration of the last words of this Psalm itself, shew that the discourse is rather of an apostacy to wickedness in general. Whoever has lost his way respecting

God, because not perceiving his righteous retribution, to him the temptation lies very near of seeking to make good his salvation by himself, without troubling himself farther with the heavy and irksome restraints of the divine law. The dainties of the wicked (מנעמים only here) are not "their treacherous speeches," also not "their temporal enjoyments and delicacies," as such, but the prosperity and fulness, which they acquire through their misdeeds, and a regard to which might so easily lead others to participate in the same—compare the graphic delineation of these dainties of the wicked in Ps. lxxiii. As here under the image of delicate food, so there in ver. 10, this prosperity is represented under the image of a copious drink, which is sipped up by the thirsty.

Ver. 5–7 contains the grounds on which the purposes and vows of the Psalmist, concealed under the prayers of the first strophe, rests. Ver. 5. *The righteous smites me in kindness and chastises me, oil for the head my head refuses not. If still, then, I shall pray against their wickednesses.* Ver. 6. *Their judges shall be thrown down in the force of the rock, for they hear my words that they are sweet.* Ver. 7. *As when one with the the plough cleaves the earth, so are our bones scattered on the brink of hell.* צדיק in ver. 5, properly the righteous one, God (to whom already Amyrald rightly referred the word) in his property as righteous, or according to his righteousness. This he manifests towards his own, in that he tempers zeal with mercy, and does not surrender them to such overwhelming destruction, as is appointed to the wicked, but only to fatherly chastisement—comp. the expression in Ps. cxliii. 1: Hear me after thy righteousness. חסד, which belongs to both verbs, is acc., which describes more minutely the way and manner of the striking and reproving—comp. Jer. xxxi. 3, where the word is used precisely in the same way, Ew. § 279, *c.* Chastisement, indeed, always proceeds from the principle of anger; but behind the anger there is concealed for the righteous mercy, which causes the manifestation of anger itself, and watches regarding it, that it should not exceed the proper limits, which separate the righteous and the wicked from each other—compare the full elucidation of what is here only briefly indicated in the speech of Elihu, Job xxxvi. 5 ss. and in the New Testament, Hebr. xii. 6. The

whole of this first member rests upon 2 Sam. vii. 14, 15: "I will be to him a father, and he will be to me a son. If he fails, I will chastise him with the rod of men, and with the stripes of the children of men; but my loving-kindness shall not depart from him, as I caused it to depart from Saul, whom I removed from before thee," (compare on the meaning of the passage Ps. lxxxix. 33, 34, where in like manner a reference is made to it.) It is also from this original passage, as to the substance, that the word דָּלַם, to beat, strike, peculiar to the passage before us, is derived. For it rests on this, that there the chastisement appears under the image of a *beating*. The reference borne to that original passage is so far of importance, that it furnishes a testimony for the correctness of the import we attach to this Psalm, and to the whole cycle it belongs to, as bearing upon the destinies of David's offspring. *The oil of the head* is always the oil, with which on festive occasions persons were wont to anoint themselves before sitting down to meat, *the oil of joy*, comp. Ps. xxiii. 5, xlv. 7, civ. 15, Matth. vi. 17. יְנִי is Fut. Hiph. of נוּא, for יְנִיא, compare Ew. § 224, *b*. נוּא has everywhere but one signification, that of keeping off, hindering, which it preserves also in Ps. xxxiii. 10: "The Lord holds off the thoughts of the people," viz., from gaining their end, *q. d.*, he brings them to nothing. Every exposition is, therefore, to be rejected as arbitrary, which does not take the word here in this signification. The sense of the words: oil of the head refuses not my head, is this: because I discern through the clouds of the divine anger the sun of the divine mercy, I will not abandon myself to sorrow and despair, after the manner of the world, when the hand of the Almighty rests upon it, but I will, and can, and must be joyful in the midst of tribulation—this is my precious privilege, of which I shall never bereave myself. Such an utterance of joy in the midst of suffering is thoroughly Davidic, comp. Ps. iv. 7, "thou givest joy in my heart more than in the time when their corn and their wine abound," lxiii. 3, xlii. 8. The words refer to the eating of dainties, or fine morsels on the part of the wicked, at the end of ver. 4. The Psalmist has still his joy even in suffering, his festive entertainment, so that he does not need to hanker after their sinful enjoyments, can give up to them their ill-gotten goods, comp. Ps. iv. 7. In the last member the רִעוּת

are not sufferings, but acts of wickedness, comp. Ps. cxl. 2, "who imagine mischiefs in the heart." The words: if still, are not to be supplied from the preceding: if still he chastises me; but from the following: if still their wicked actions proceed, if they overstep the due measure of paternal chastisement. *So*, or *then my prayer* (comp. on the ו Ew. § 335), then have I a mighty weapon for prayer to my God against them, since he, indeed, uses the wicked as a rod of chastisement for his people, but constantly says to them in his own time: hitherto shalt thou come but no farther; comp. Ps. lxix. 13, cix. 4. The verse before us has had the misfortune of being generally misunderstood. Quite erroneous is the translation of Luther: Let the righteous smite me in a friendly manner, and chastise me, this will be as good to me as a balsam on my head, for I pray continually, that they may not do me hurt. So also the translation of De Wette and others: Let the righteous smite me, it is love, let him punish me, an ointment of my head, declines not my head; he repeats: still my prayer is against their wickedness, *q. d.*, from friends I can indeed suffer what is not pleasant for my improvement, but the malice of enemies I cannot bear: Against the connection, into which the thought would be, as it were, cut in, against the accents and the natural connection of the words: oil of the head refuses not my head, against the signification of הלם, which is never used of "striking with words, blaming," against the radical passage in 2 Sam. vii.; instead of the ו in ותפלתי there would then be required a stronger particle bringing prominently out the contrast. We pass over other arbitrary things, as their refutation has already been given in the positive grounds advanced for our exposition.—With the last words of ver. 5: then is my prayer against their wickedness, ver. 6 and 7 connect themselves, and describe the consequence of this prayer, the overthrow of the wicked, and the deliverance of the righteous, and thereby furnish a temptation to the second rod. The נשמטו, in ver. 6, signifies to let loose, then to let fall down, to throw down; comp. 2 Kings ix. 33, where it is used of Jezebel. בידי signifies as certainly *in* the power, as מידך in ver. 9 *out* of the power. The judges are, therefore, thrown from the rock (which is not expressly said) upon the rock or against the rock—אל הסלע, Ps. cxxxvii. 9; so that the rock receives and crushes them; comp. 2 Chron. xxv. 12, where in a

war against Edom, as it appears, a premature practical application was made of this passage. The judges are the possessors of the world's power, who rebel against the kingdom of David; comp. Ps. ii. 2, 10, where also in ver. 9, as here, a dashing in pieces is threatened to the enemies of David's kingdom. The second half alludes to Ps. cxxxviii. 4: "All the kings of the earth will praise thee, O Lord, when they hear the words of thy mouth." *My words*, by which I invite them to submit themselves to the Lord's anointed, comp. Ps. ii. 10–12. Brought to discretion by the injuries they had received, they would find precious to them these hitherto despised words. The enemies of the kingdom of David are the subject in שָׁמְעוּ, to which the suffix refers in: their judges. That they precious, for, as precious.—In ver. 7: like one who ploughs and cleaves, is *q. d.*, as when one by ploughing cleaves the earth. פָּזַר occurs in Ps. liii. 5, in the sense of scattering, and that, too, in connection with bones. לְפִי at the mouth, or opening, Jos. x. 18, 22, Prov. viii. 3. The bones are scattered, as it were, at the mouth of Sheol, into which the souls have descended. Several understand by the *mouth* of Sheol its devouring rapacity; comp. Is. v. 14; Michaelis: ad os usque mortis devoraturae. Sheol, however, may well be regarded as devouring souls, but not bones. The sense of the passage is this: as in ploughing the tearing up of the earth is not the ultimate design, but only the means to a fruitful result, only serves the purpose of making the earth yield its produce; therefore, with an equally beneficent design, or in order that, through the present injury, new life may arise, our bones also are scattered about. While the enemies are conducted from life to death, ver. 6, we are conducted from death to life. We have here the first germ of Is. xxvi. 19, Ez. xxxvii. How untenable the views of this verse are, which deviate from the one now given, and find in it only an expression of sorrowful lamentation, is clear already from remarks such as those of De Wette: "After the preceding wish this thought follows inconveniently," and from the manifold arbitrary explanations of כִּי, at the beginning of ver. 8, which those different views have given rise to. (Hitzig: indeed, Ewald: however, Tholuck: but, Stier: nevertheless; Maurer leaves it its common signification, *for*, but refers it to ver. 4, 5!) That the substance of the verse must be of a joyful and consolatory kind, is rendered

necessary by its connection with the preceding verse, and equally so with the following one. The prayer, which, in ver. 8, is grounded upon the declarations contained in this verse, is directed to the preservation of the being, and of this, therefore, must the discourse also be in the declaration before us. As the prayer in ver. 8–10 has a double object, self-preservation and the destruction of the enemies, so has also the declaration according to the view we have given of it.

Ver. 8–10.—Ver. 8. *For to thee, Lord God, are our eyes, upon thee do I trust, pour not out my soul.* Ver. 9. *Preserve me from the power of the snare, which they have laid for me, and from the pits of the evil-doers.* Ver. 10. *Let the wicked fall into their nets altogether, till I pass over.*—On the first member of ver. 8 comp. Ps. xxv. 15; on the expression: upon thee I trust, Ps. xxxi. 2. ערה in Hiph. to be poured out, Isa. xxxii. 15, in Pi. to pour out, Gen. xxiv. 20; and so also in Hiph., and indeed precisely as here of the soul, in Isa. liii. 12: "because he has poured out his soul to the death." The expression passed over to the soul from the blood, in which the soul is. The soul or the life is here not that of the individual, but of the family, and consequently also of the people, whose existence was rooted in that of the anointed house—comp. Lam. iv. 20. Luther falsely: expel not. That the fut. in ver. 10 is to be taken as a wish, and not as a prophetical announcement, is clear from the connection with the preceding context. The suff. in מכמוריו refers to the ideal person of the wicked: in their own net, comp. Ps. cxl. 10, vii. 15. To יחד the enemies altogether, comp. xl. 15, we must supply from the first member: let them fall in. Luther, without injury as to the sense, has drawn this much tortured יחד to the first member. *Till I pass over*, Vulg. donec transiero, viz. unhurt by the nets. The destruction of the enemies brought about by their own machinations must proceed till they have been completely annihilated, and David has become entirely free.

PSALM CXLII.

The superscription reads: *an instruction of David. When he was in the cave. A prayer.* On משכיל instruction, comp. at,

Ps. xxxii. This designation is here proved to be original by the conclusion of the Psalm, which, in conformity with that, points to the general import of what primarily applied only to David, thus corresponding to the relation which ver. 8 bears to the superscription in Ps. xxxii. The: in the cave, refers not to some particular cave, but only indicates that the Psalm contains cave-thoughts—comp. at Ps. lvii. On תְּפִלָּה, not prayer generally, but supplicatory prayer entirely—comp. on Ps. cii. supers. cxli. 5.

That the situation indicated in the superscription was not the proper occasion of the Psalm, but that David here only applies what he then experienced for the edification of others, appears not simply from the expression, "an instruction," in the front of the superscription, out of which the following words: when he was in the cave, derive their more definite import, but still more from the fact, that the Psalm stands in close contact with the rest of the cycle of which it forms a part (comp., for example, ver. 3, with cxli. 9, cxl. 5, cxliii. 4) and the exposition.

David sees in his desperate condition, when he was in the cave, a type of the future condition of his race and of the church. His cave-reflections he sets before them as an instruction. When it might come with them to an extremity—this is the posture of affairs contemplated, and such must come, for it cannot go otherwise with the son than with the father, they too must have their Saul to withstand—they should still not despair, but pour out their complaint before the Lord.

The whole is completed in the number seven, divided by the four and three. The name Jehovah occurs three times, twice at the beginning of the first, and once at the beginning of the second strophe.

Ver. 1–4.—Ver. 1. *I cry to the Lord with my voice, I make supplication to the Lord with my voice.* Ver. 2. *I pour out my complaint before him, and shew before him my distress.* Ver. 3. *Because my spirit is overwhelmed in me, and thou knowest my path: upon the way that I should go they hid snares for me.* Ver. 4. *Look to the right hand and lo! there will no one know me, every refuge is lost for me, no one concerns himself for my soul.*—On קוֹלִי, in ver. 1, comp. Ps. iii. 4. To the Lord—who once so gloriously listened to the progenitor, when he was hopelessly lost. On the second member comp.

Ps. xxx. 8. On ver. 2 comp. the superscription of Ps. cii., a Psalm of David: "Prayer of the miserable when he is in distress, and pours out his complaint before the Lord;" also Ps. lxii. 8, lxiv. 1.—Ver. 3 declares what caused the Psalmist to go with supplication and prayer to the Lord. This was the deep prostration of spirit corresponding to his desperate condition, coupled with the conviction that God knew his way, and, as is further mentioned with the view of presenting a more exact and extended description of it, the dangers which threatened him in the way—comp. Ps. i. 6. Others, after the example of Luther, elevate the connection between this verse and the preceding, and take the vau in ואתה as the mark of a conclusion from the former member: when my spirit is overwhelmed, then thou knowest my path, for then the thought comforts me, that thou knowest. On עטף comp. at Ps. cii. supers., cvii. 5, lxxvii. 3. In regard to עלי, in me, comp. at Ps. xlii. 4. That we must explain: which I should go, not: which I go, appears from Ps. cxliii. 8.—The right hand is named in ver 4, because, being the instrument of action, it is the most suitable place for any one who would either effectually hinder or support one—comp. on Ps. cix. 5, cxxi. 5. *There is no one that knows me*, will know, they all make themselves strange, and no one extends to me assistance, comp. Ps. xxxviii. 11. The consideration of this mournful helplessness, which, according to ver. 3, lay open before God as the omniscient, must move him to come forth as the present help in trouble. "When there is no longer any one on earth, in whose aid thou canst confide, then will he be thy comforter, and will look on thee for thy good," מנוס, refuge, as in lix. 16.

Ver. 5–7.—Ver. 5. *I cry to thee, Lord, I say: thou art my confidence, my portion in the land of the living.* Ver. 6. *Attend to my supplication, for I have become very thin; deliver me from my persecutors, for they are too powerful for me.* Ver. 7. *Bring my soul out of prison, that men may praise thy name; the righteous shall compass me about, when thou dealest kindly with me.*—The beginning of the second strophe, in ver. 5, takes up again the beginning of the first. On the expression: thou art my confidence, comp. Ps. lxii. 7, lxxi. 7. On: my portion, *q. d.* my helper and bestower of salvation, comp. on Ps. xvi. 5, lxxiii. 26. On: in the land of the living, at xxvii. 13,

lii. 6.—On the words: attend to my supplication, ver. 6, comp. xvii. 1, lxi. 1. *I have become very thin*, cômp. Ps. lxxix. 9, rests, as it appears, on Judg. vi. 6, "and Israel was very thin before Midian." On: deliver me from my persecutors, comp. Ps. vii. 1. The allusion to this passage warrants us to read between the lines: thou, who didst once so wonderfully answer the same prayer. On: for they are too powerful for me, comp. Ps. xviii. 17.—On: bring me out of the prison, comp. xxv. 17: "Bring me out of my distresses," and cxliii. 11: "Thou wilt bring my soul out of distress." Upon the prison as an image of trouble and distress, see on Ps. cvii. 10. There is, perhaps, an allusion to the history of Joseph, *q. d.*, lead me out of distress, as formerly in the type Joseph was delivered from the prison, comp. on Ps. cv. 17 ss. *My soul*, the distressed, ver. 3, the endangered, cxli. 8. That the expression: to praise thy name, comp. Ps. vii. 17, cxl. 14, must be explained: that men may praise, I in company with the righteous, not with Luther: that I may praise, appears from the following words. כתר means in Hiph. only to *surround*, comp. Hab. i. 4, Prov. xiv. 8; as also in Pi. comp. Ps. xxii. 12, with the single exception of Job xxxvi. 2, where the Arabic usage is employed. בי marks the tender fellow-feeling with which they surround him, pressing closely upon him. The allusion to the sympathy of the righteous, in regard to the deliverance granted to the Psalmist, is one of frequent occurrence with David; comp., for example. Ps. xl. 16, xxxv. 27. On גמל with על, to give, to deal kindly, comp. on Ps. xiii. 6, ciii. 10.

PSALM CXLIII.

The Psalm is completed in the number twelve, and falls into two main parts, each of six verses, divided by Selah—the first (after an introductory prayer in ver. 1 and 2) containing a representation of the distress and the complaint, the second containing the prayer and the hope. The six is again divided by the three, so that the whole falls into four strophes, each of three verses. To the number of verses corresponds the fourfold Jehovah, which makes up the number seven, when added to the three-

fold use of the name in the preceding Psalm. So also the number of the preparatory petitions, ver. 1 and 2. To the number of particular strophes corresponds the threefold mention of the loving-kindness of the Lord, and of his righteousness and truth, which is also thrice noticed. It corresponds to the division into two halves, that the Psalmist twice designates himself, in ver. 2 and 12, as the servant of the Lord. The whole number of verses corresponds to the twelve times utterance of prayer and hope in the second part, in each verse a double one, with the exception of ver. 7, where there are three petitions, and of ver. 9, where there is only one—in each strophe six petitions, corresponding to the number of verses in the two divisions. The representation of the distress in the first division, ver. 3–6, presents ten particulars, in the first strophe three, in the second seven, according to one of the two ordinary divisions of the ten. In like manner the second part presents a tenfold grounding of the prayer and hope, in each strophe a fivefold one, according to the other of the two ordinary divisions of the ten, 2. 2. 1.—1. 2. 2.

In unison with the superscription, the Psalm bears evidence throughout of David's spirit and David's mode of expression. It is almost wholly composed of the sounds of complaint, supplication, and hope, which had already been uttered in the earlier Davidic Psalms (only in such), and had sunk deep into the heart. These clear brooks were drawn from all sides into the channel of this smooth-flowing Psalm, which was designed to provide quickening for the fainting souls of David's race during future times of oppression. With so much of dependance the Psalm still bears throughout the character of originality, not merely where the dependance ceases, as in ver. 2, which has become of such importance for the church, and to which the Psalm owes its place among those of the penitential class, though, from its predominant tendency, it does not belong to that class, but also in the dependant passages themselves, in the thoughtful and artificial manner of their collection, which could only have proceeded from the person, out of whose breast the utterances originally welled forth. There is nowhere any trace of "a flat compilation;" all is feeling and life. Along with this there is the repose and self-possession of one who does not find himself immediately involved in the distress, but looks down upon it as from a high tower, and

prays and intercedes for the afflicted of his seed, as Moses of old did upon the Mount.

That the Psalm must not be viewed apart from those that surround it, is clear already from the connection with Ps. cxlii., comp. ver. 4 here with ver. 3 there, ver. 8 with ver. 3, and ver. 11 with ver. 7. That David calls himself so expressly at the beginning and the end the servant of God, establishes a connection with 2 Sam. vii., where, in David's thanksgiving, this appellation occurs almost in every verse.

Ver. 1–6.—Ver. 1. *Lord, hear my prayer, attend to my supplication, in thy faithfulness hear me, in thy righteousness.* Ver. 2. *And enter not into judgment with thy servant, for before thee no one living is righteous.* Ver. 3. *For the enemy persecutes my soul, crushes to the ground my life, makes me to dwell in dark places like one eternally dead.* Ver. 4. *And wearied is my spirit with me, my heart is confounded to me in my body.* Ver. 5. *I think of the days of old, I reflect upon all thy doing, meditate upon the work of thy hands.* Ver. 6. *I stretch forth my hands to thee, my soul is to thee as a faint land. Selah.*—In ver. 1 the hearing is rested upon a double foundation, the faithfulness and righteousness of God, corresponding to the double prayer in the first half of the verse. The appeal to the faithfulness presupposes, that the Psalmist had received definite promises from God, comp. 2 Sam. vii. Righteousness gives to every one his own; to the righteous—and only such must venture, after Ps. cxxxix., to take into their mouth the words of this Psalm—in spite of their failings, the forgiveness of which is itself the work of divine righteousness (comp. on Ps. li. 15) salvation; to the wicked destruction. In Ps. xxxvi. 5, 6, righteousness and faithfulness are united together.—*Enter not into judgment with thy servant*, ver. 2, on account of the human infirmity, which still always cleaves to thy people, along with the righteousness which they also possess as the indispensable condition of salvation. The Psalmist had appealed in ver. 1 to the divine righteousness. The appeal to this has for its foundation a consciousness of personal righteousness, compare on Ps. xvii. 1. But with the mention of this there is quite naturally introduced also the thought of its great imperfection, and on this account the Psalmist betakes himself to the forbearance and pardoning mercy of the Lord, which

can never be withdrawn from his servants, which he must grant them precisely according to his righteousness (comp. on Ps. xix. 13), not because they could demand it, but because he would otherwise deny his own nature. The accuser goes into the judgment with the accused Job ix. 32, xxii. 4; but here the accuser is, at the same time, judge, and appears as such in the second member. God does go in point of fact into judgment with those who have offended against him, by suspending over them desolating punishments. The expression: with thy servant, contains the grounding of the prayer; with his servants God *cannot* go into judgment; he chastens them indeed, but he does not give them over to death. *No one living*, no servant even, who constantly needs the forgiveness of his sins, and must perish, if thou dost not grant it to him, 1 Pet. iv. 18. The passage before us has produced impressions also upon the territory of Scripture. There is an entire series of similar expressions resting upon it in the book of Job; for example, ix. 2, xiv. 3, xv. 14, then Rom. iii. 20.— The *for* in ver. 3 grounds the preceding prayers: not that merely in ver. 1, but the one also in ver. 2. For the request: enter not into judgment, is as to the meaning, *q. d.* surrender me not on account of my failings to destruction. On the first member comp. Ps. vii. 5. The Psalmist must, in spite of his innocence (comp. Ps. cxxxix.) suffer what, according to that fundamental passage, could permanently and conclusively rest only upon those who are laden with guilt. The fem. form חַיָּה, in the sig. of life only poetically, occurs in this sig. also in another Psalm, of the time of David, Ps. lxxviii. 50. In regard to the *dark places* in the third member, compare on Ps. lxxxviii. 6. What is only briefly indicated here, is there enlarged upon in ver. 3-6, a passage in other respects also containing various marks of dependance. This third member is literally borrowed in Lam. iii. 6. As a commentary on the words: dead of eternity, or eternally dead (Clauss: "who lie in the long-continuing night of the grave and of death, out of which no return can be found to this life,") those in Ps. lxxxviii. 5 may serve: "whom thou rememberest no more, and they are cut off from thy hand," *q. d.*, who have for ever ceased to be the objects of thy providential care. Several: as those who have been long dead; but whether long ago or recently makes no difference. Luther falsely: as the dead in the world.

—On the first member of ver. 4 compare Ps. cxlii. 3. שׁמם, to be prostrated in soul, faint, compare Ps. xl. 15.—From the connection the mention of God's active energy in the bestowal of salvation upon his people during the past, the wonders he wrought for their deliverance, cannot be as an object of hope (several: sperans quod mihi etiam nunc ita sis facturus) as in Ps. xliv. 1–3, but only a doleful one, as in Ps. xxii. 3–5. For we find ourselves here in the region of sorrow. In the dependant passage also, Ps. lxxvii. 5, the remembrance of the past serves, not to mitigate, but to increase and deepen the pain. On the second and third members, comp. the dependant passage, Ps. xcii. 5.—The second member of ver. 6 rests upon Ps. lxiii. 1: "My soul thirsts after thee in a dry land, and faints without water." As a parched land stands related to the rain, so my soul to thee, and to thy salvation. The relation is only indicated in a general way. The more exact description would have been: as faint land thirsts after the rain, so thirsts my soul after thee. Stier: "faint land mixes the image in a lively manner, since properly only נפשׁ עיפה, a faint, languishing soul, could be used."

Ver. 7—12. Ver. 7. *Make haste, hear me, Lord, my spirit is exhausted, hide not thy face from me, otherwise I shall be like those that go into hell.* Ver. 8. *Let me hear in the morning thy loving-kindness, for on thee I trust, make known to me the way, wherein I should go, for to thee I carry my soul.* Ver. 9. *Deliver me from mine enemies, Lord, to thee I hide myself.* Ver. 10. *Teach me to do thy will, for thou art my God, let thy spirit, the good, lead me upon a plain land.* Ver. 11. *For thy name's sake, Lord, wilt thou quicken me; in thy righteousness wilt thou bring my soul out of trouble.* Ver. 12. *And in thy loving-kindness wilt thou extirpate mine enemies, and destroy all, who make war against my soul, for I am thy servant* On the words: make haste, hear me, in ver. 7, comp. cii. 2, lxix. 17. On: for my spirit is exhausted, through the heavy, long-continued suffering, Ps. xxxix. 10: "Through the blow of thy hands I am exhausted;" on the second half, Ps. cii. 2, and xxviii. 1. The prayer in both members is grounded upon this, that matters had now come with the Psalmist to an extremity. Where this is the case with the servants of God, there the divine help cannot be longer withheld. In ver. 8 and 9 the prayer rests upon

the heartfelt confidence which the Psalmist entertained toward God, on the principle, that whoever places his confidence in God, he cannot be abandoned by God. On the expression: let me hear, ver. 8, through a matter-of-fact speech, a proof of loving kindness, comp. Ps. li. 9. On: in the morning, Ps. lix. 16. That in the prayer: make known to me the way wherein I should go, the discourse is not of a moral guidance, but that the way is the way of salvation from trouble, appears from Ps. cxlii. 3, and the radical passage, Ps. xxv. 4. Calvin: "When he seeks that the way should be made patent to him, in which he should walk, the matter is to be referred to his anxieties. For it signifies, that he stood as it were astonished, incapable of lifting a foot, unless by having a way of escape divinely laid open to him; as if he should say: Lord, all the desires of my soul are borne upwards to thee; therefore in a time of so great perplexity do thou administer counsel to me." The words, "On thee I trust," and "to thee I carry my soul," are taken from Ps. xxv. 1, 2. On: deliver my soul from my enemies, in ver. 9, comp. lix. 1, cxlii. 6. The second member literally: to thee I cover or conceal myself; כסה to cover one's self, Gen. xxxviii. 14, Deut. xxii. 12, Jon. iii. 6. The unusual and strange manner of expression was called forth by the reference had to Ps. xxvii. 5: "for he conceals me in his tabernacle at the time of adversity, he covers me in the secret of his tent," and Ps. xxxi. 20, "Thou hidest them in a tabernacle from the strife of tongues." The כסה here is the transposed סכה there. The allusion points to this, that God must conceal those who conceal themselves with him. It is commonly explained: for I discover myself to thee, or confide myself in secret. But the expression: to conceal to any one, for to discover one's self to him, is very hard, (besides, the parallel: I confide, I carry my soul, in ver. 8, shews, that here also the discourse must be of confidence), and what then could be the meaning of: confide in secret? The matter in hand here was a secret grief, for the distress of the Psalmist lay open to all the world. The correct view was already given by Calvin.—In ver. 10 many expositors find only a prayer for moral strength, others only a prayer for the granting of deliverance. Both views are beset with difficulties. The first member cannot without violence be understood otherwise, than of moral instruction, and the bestowal of

strength—comp. Ps. xl. 9, nor can we without violence fail to recognize in the "good Spirit," the Spirit, which teaches the well disposed to do good. But it is at the same time impossible to understand by the leading upon a plain land something else than external preservation and prosperity. The leading is already of itself a standing term for leading upon the path of salvation—comp., for example, Ps. cxxxix. 10, 24; and the parallel and fundamental passages in the Psalms of David for the whole manner of speech, leave no shadow of doubt upon the subject—comp. v. 8, xxvii. 11, and xxvi. 12, "My foot stands upon the plain," where the plain stands opposed to a difficult piece of ground, full of steep rocks and pits. The exposition: pathway of manners, righteousness, is therefore decidedly to be rejected. The difficulties connected with both the expositions may be removed by the following view. David's proper regard is directed to the obtaining of deliverance, which is the object of all his prayers in the preceding and following verses. But he shews himself throughout deeply penetrated with the conviction, that the foundation of the deliverance is righteousness—that it never *can* come, where this foundation is wanting, but that it of necessity *must* come, where this foundation exists. He knew, also, that nothing could be done here by one's own power—comp., for example, Ps. xix., li. Hence he prays here, expanding his views farther, that the Lord would (internally) teach him to do his will, convinced that this first gift must necessarily draw the second in its train, that of salvation; so, he prays, that the good Spirit of God would make him good, and consequently would guide him upon the path of salvation. We must explain: Thy Spirit, good, *q. d.*, which is a good one, or, and indeed the good, as opposed to the evil spirit, to the dominion of which Saul was given up in righteous judgment, and which hurried him onward into sin and perdition—comp. 1 Sam. xvi. 14, 15, xviii. 10, and corresponding to the Holy Spirit in Ps. li. The good Spirit *works* good in those who partake of the gift.—The expression: for thy name's sake, ver. 11, is a standing one with David—comp. xxiii. 3, xxv. 11, xxxi. 3, cix. 20. On: thou wilt quicken me, comp. Ps. cxxxviii. 7. On this: after thy righteousness, ver. 1, and Ps. xxxi, 1. On the last words, Ps. cxlii. 7, xxv. 15, xxxiv. 17.—On the first member of ver. 12, comp. Ps. xxxi. 16, xviii. 40. דאבדת, the

pret., as an expression of confidence, to which the Psalmist rose from the prayer through the intermediate stage of hope (the fut. in the preceding verb), points distinctly to Deut. vii. 24. On the last words: for I am thy servant, Calvin says: "By naming himself the servant of God, he by no means extols his own services, but rather commends the grace of God, to which ought to be referred what he had done with acceptance. For not by our own prowess or labour is this dignity acquired, that we should be reckoned among the servants of God, but it depends on his free election, which even before we were born has graciously appointed us to the number and rank of his people."

PSALM CXLIV.

Thanks be to the Lord, my helper in all trouble, ver. 1 and 2; thanks, that he should have so regarded a poor mortal, ver. 3 and 4; Lord, manifest thyself to me now as a helper in trouble by giving deliverance from the wicked, my enemies, ver. 5–8. I thank thee for the help, which is certified to me through faith, ver. 9 and 10. Nay, deliver thou me from the hand of the sons of strangers, and let thy blessing return to rest on thy people, ver. 11 and 12, ver. 13 and 14. An epiphonem forms the close in ver. 15.

The Psalm is ruled by the numbers ten and seven. Ten verses complete the first part of the whole, which falls into two divisions. This contains, in ver. 1 and 2, ten predicates of God, three and seven, the last divided by four and three. In like manner, ten request to God in ver. 5–7, divided precisely as the predicates. To this significance of the number ten for the first part, allusion is pointedly made in ver. 9.—The whole contains, apart from the epiphonem, which, as usual, stands outside the formal arrangement, seven strophes, each of two verses. Seven blessings are prayed for in the second part, four in ver. 12, 13 (valiant sons, beautiful daughters, full store-houses, numerous flocks), and three in ver. 14 (labouring oxen, no breach and diminution, no cry).—The number of the names of God, Jehovah four times and Elohim once, corresponds to the number of verses in the second part (the Elohim for the epiphonem), and the strophe of the first part.

In unison with the superscription, David comes forth speaking, comp. especially ver. 2, which alone suffices to dispose of the supposition, that Israel is the speaker here; and the declaration: who constrains my people under me, cannot, without great violence, be brought into accordance with that supposition. David, as the author, appropriates also from Ps. xviii. It is an arbitrary supposition, that here a transference is made to Israel of what was then said originally of David. The confirmation which the superscription here derives from the contents, comes also in support of the whole cycle, to which the Psalm belongs. An objection has been brought against the Davidic authorship from the "traces of reading" it contains. But one would require to consider more exactly, what sort of reading is here to be thought of. It is only the Psalms of David which form the groundwork of this. But that it is one of David's peculiarities to derive from his earlier productions a foundation for new ones, is evident from a variety of facts (comp. Introd. to Ps. cviii.), which, if any doubt might still be entertained on the subject, would obtain a firm ground to stand upon in this Psalm, which *can* only have been composed by David. Then the way and manner of the use made of such materials is to be kept in view. This is always of a spirited and feeling nature, and no trace anywhere exists of a dead borrowing. That we cannot think here of such an one, that the appropriation of the earlier did not proceed from spiritual impotence, but rests upon deeper grounds, is manifest from the consideration of the second part, where the dependance entirely ceases, and where even the opponents of the Davidic authorship have not been able to overlook the strong poetical spirit of the time of David. They betake to the miserable shift of affirming, that the Psalmist had borrowed this part from a much older poem now lost.

The situation is that of an oppression through mighty external enemies. As this Psalm rests upon Ps. xviii., which was composed by David toward the end of his life, after he had obtained deliverance from all the perils of war, it cannot be referred to the personal relations of David; David rather transports himself here, as in the whole of the cycle, into the future of his race.

This Psalm forms the transition from the two prayer-Psalms, cxlii., cxliii. to the song of praise, cxlv. The cloud of adversity begins already to disperse, and the sun of salvation is on the eve

of breaking forth. Ver. 9 and 10 shew that the Psalmist already stands on the threshold of praise and thanksgiving. The cry from the deep has ceased; at the very commencement, the exclamation, "Let the Lord be praised," etc. breathes the spirit of victory, and leads on to the: "I will praise thy name," in Ps. cxlv.

Ver. 1–10.—Ver. 1. *Of David. Praised be the Lord, my rock, who instructs my hands for battle, and my fingers for war.* Ver. 2. *My kindness and my fortress, my strong tower and my deliverer to me, my shield and on whom I trust, who constrains my people under me.* Ver. 3. *Lord, what is man, that thou takest knowledge of him, the son of the mortal, that thou regardest him!* Ver. 4. *Man is like to vanity, his days are as a flying shadow.* Ver. 5. *Lord, bend thy heavens and come down; touch the mountains, that they may smoke.* Ver. 6. *Lighten with lightning, and scatter them, send forth thine arrows and confound them.* Ver. 7. *Stretch out thy hand from the height, redeem me, and deliver me from many waters, from the hand of the sons of the stranger.* Ver. 8. *Whose mouth speaks deceit, and whose right hand is a right hand of lies.* Ver. 9. *God, a new song will I sing to thee, upon the psaltery of ten strings will I play to thee.* Ver. 10. *Who gives salvation to kings, who redeems David his servant from the hurtful sword.*—The words: Praised be my rock, ver. 1, is taken from Ps. xviii. 46, comp. ver. 2; the second member rests on Ps. xviii. 34. There the subject is not David as an individual, but the whole seed of David. Accordingly, we must here also translate, not instruct, but only instructs. In ver. 1 and 2 the Psalmist lays a firm and solid foundation by pointing to the relation in which he stands to his God. On this, after he has celebrated in ver. 3 and 4 the depth of the divine condescension, he grounds, in ver. 5, the prayer, that he might act agreeably to that relation, as it had partly been confirmed by past experience, and partly by the promise in 2 Sam. vii., that he might beat down his enemies.—The Psalmist calls God, in ver. 2, his *kindness*, because he was nothing but kindness toward him; comp.: my kindness-God, for my gracious God, in Ps. lix. 17. The five following predicates, and therefore the half of the ten predicates in ver. 1 and 2, are taken from Ps. xviii. 2, where the predicates of God, in like manner, as in this

verse, are completed in the number seven. To מִמַּלְמֵי there is here, precisely as in the text in 2 Sam., added לִי. The expression: and on whom I trust, is abbreviated from: my God is my rock, in whom I trust, which is found there. The designations of God, in Ps. xviii. 2, contain not only the expression of thanks for the past, but also that of hope for the future; they mark a standing relation, out of which the future salvation must, with like necessity, proceed, as the past had already done; hence we must explain here, not: the Lord *was*, but only: the Lord *is*. David had this great advantage, that what had already been accomplished, had been in no respect obtained by his own power and prudence, but only through the help of God. And it was in this that the vitality of his hope respecting the future destiny of his race rooted itself. The last member rests on Ps. xviii. 43, "Thou deliverest me from the strivings of the people," where in 2 Sam. we have *my* people, and, in ver. 48, "and constrains peoples under me." The עַמִּי, my people, rendered certain by 2 Sam. only presents a difficulty when the Davidic composition is denied, and the idea is carried through at all hazards, that Israel speaks in the Psalm. In that case also, it is necessary to resort to the unfortunate supposition of a "rare plural form" (comp. on the contrary at Ps. xlv. 8), or of an error in the text. The reference to both passages at the same time shews, that here by the people of David his subjects generally are to be understood (comp. Ps. ii., where it is described, how God constrains the people of the anointed under him.) To the people of David belongs also, according to Ps. xviii., a wide heathen territory; and that we are here to think preëminently of this, is manifest from the circumstance that the sentence before us forms the foundation for the subsequent prayer for victory in respect to "the sons of the stranger."—The relation of ver. 3 and 4 to ver. 1 and 2, was already quite correctly and profoundly discerned by Calvin; while more recent expositors with their interpretation: "God be praised, who helps me—man without God is helpless" (where is this found?) have entirely erred from the right path. David, after having declared what God was to him, considers, after the example of Jacob: Lord, I am too little for all thy loving-kindness, &c., what he himself is, and while he brings into view his own nothingness, and that of mankind generally, the adorable

greatness of the divine grace first comes prominently into its proper light, and he can with full inwardness embrace it in his heart. Humility is the mother of confidence. That this view is the correct one, is plain from the original passage, Ps. viii. 5, and from the beginning of David's prayer in 2 Sam. vii.: "Who am I, Lord God, and what my house, that thou hast brought me so far; and that is still too little to thee, Lord God, and thou hast spoken to the house of thy servant for a long time yet to come, and thus thou dealest with the man, Lord God." To *know*, is *q. d.*, to take notice. For the first member of ver. 4, comp. Ps. lxii. 9, xxxix. 5, 6; and for the second, Ps. ciii. 15, cii. 11. He, whose being is confined within such narrow limits, cannot be any thing great and glorious, he cannot have any thing which could make him worthy of the divine favour and loving-kindness.—What the Lord is for David, that it behoves him now to prove by fact; hence the prayer in the two strophes, ver. 5, 6, and 7, 8. The first member of ver. 5 rests upon Ps. xviii. 9: "And he bowed the heavens and came down." The preterite there lays an excellent foundation for the imperative here. What the Lord had once done for him during the persecution from Saul, formed a pledge for what he here prays the Lord still to perform. In reference to the second member, comp. on the dependant passage, Ps. civ. 32. The mountains are here also brought into notice as the symbol of kingdoms.—Ver. 6 rests on Ps. xviii. 14: "and he sent out his arrows and scattered them, lightnings (here, the singular as in Sam.; the Psalmist has throughout both texts before him, which may also be regarded as a proof, that both must have proceeded from David), much, and confounded them." The allusion rests also here upon the consideration, that all God's acts are prophecies. The verb ברק occurring only here, was probably formed for the occasion.—Ver. 7 rests on Ps. xviii. 16: "He sends from the height, takes me, draws me out of many waters." Peculiar here is the: thy hands, and the פצה, elsewhere to open, here in the rare sig. of setting free, which is elsewhere found only in the dialects. The sons of the stranger, is an expression taken from Ps. xviii. 44, 45.—On the first member of ver. 8, comp. Ps. xii. 2, xli. 6. By the right hand every one thinks primarily, not of an oath, but of shaking hands, 2 Kings x. 15, and to this points also here the parallel passage, as the deceit of the mouth,

mentioned there, also consists in false assurances of friendship. We may compare: "the sons of the stranger *feign* to me," in Ps. xviii. 44, conceal their hatred under the appearance of love. This representation of the character of the sons of the stranger rests upon many personal experiences through which David had passed.—Ver. 9 rests on Ps. xxxiii. 2, 3: "Sing praise to him on the psaltery with ten strings. Sing to him a new song." The new song must here be a song of thanksgiving to the Lord for the new manifestations of favour which David had already received in faith: the church of God, which in faith anticipates the future, possesses the great privilege of being able to thank God even before the benefit has been actually received, and to celebrate his praise, comp. on Ps. lxxv. Everywhere, when a new song is spoken of, the song itself is meant in which the expression is found. And so here also the new song is primarily our Psalm, which begins at the very outset with "God be praised," and is full of triumphant confidence; so that, behind the prayer, thanksgiving everywhere discovers itself; and in the last strophe it comes freely out. But the continuation and completion of the new song is given in Ps. cxlv. The mention of the psaltery of ten strings—comp. on Ps. xxxiii.—contains an allusion to the formal arrangement of the Psalm: on every string a verse.—The words: thou who givest salvation to kings, ver. 10, signify, in accordance with xxxiii. 16, "a king is not helped by his great might," that it is from God, not from their own power, that all the salvation flows which is experienced by kings. It forms the preparation for the second member: thou who, since it is from thee that all salvation comes which is obtained by kings, the supposed gods of the earth, &c. We must not translate with the Vulgate: thou who hast redeemed, but only: thou who redeemest. The redemption is a continued one, comp. ver. 1, 2; and here it is spoken of in reference to a still future preservation; פצה alludes to the פצני in ver. 7 and 11. Already, on account of the parallel נורתן, the participle can only indicate the present. That the phrase: David his servant, stands for me his servant, is abundantly manifest from the: of David, in the superscription, and from ver. 1 and 2, according to which no other than David speaks here. The Psalmist expresses his name David, so that it might be clear from the first that the song composed by him, ac-

cording to the superscription, also spoke of him. Precisely in the same manner does David speak of himself in the third person in Ps. lxi. 6, lxiii. 11, and especially in Ps. xviii. 50, 2 Sam. vii. 26. The expression: his servant, joins on to Ps. cxliii. 2, 12, and contains the ground of the deliverance. In regard to the *sword*, comp. on Ps. xxii. 20.

Ver. 11–15.—Ver. 11. *Redeem me and deliver me from the hand of the sons of the stranger, whose mouth speaks deceit, and whose right hand is a right hand of lies.* Ver. 12. *That our sons may be as plants, vigorously shooting up in their youth, our daughters like projectures, hewn as a palace.* Ver. 13. *That our garners may be full, supplying one kind after another, our sheep increased to thousands, to ten thousands in our streets.* Ver. 14. *That our yoke-oxen may be loaded, no breaking and no loss, and no cry in our streets.* Ver. 15. *Happy the people with whom it goes thus, happy the people of whom the Lord is its God.*—The beginning of the second strophe, ver. 11, is from ver. 7 and 8. The אשר in ver. 12, in the sig. of *so that*, comp. Deut. iv. 40, Ew. § 327, *a*. Hence, every thing which is mentioned in this and the next verse, must be regarded as *a consequence of the deliverance from the enemies*, in ver. 11. In times of war there are pale countenances and emaciated forms, sickly and dying children. Remarks, such as those of Amyrald, "All these things are to be chiefly referred by Christians to spiritual blessings," have truth in them, but would have found little response in such periods as those of the thirty years' war. A false spiritualism has led various expositors of name into the monstrous supposition, that ver. 12–14 form a discourse of worldly-minded strangers! That the comparison with plants refers to the fresh vigorous increase, appears from מגדלים, not educati, but made, or become great, powerful. As this refers to the sons, so must מחטבות refer to the daughters, not to the corners—comp. the זָוִית in Zech. ix. 15 (falsely some: corner pillars); hewn = as hewn. The comparison indicates the beauty. Palace is the general, corners the particular: after the fashion (comp. the תבנית in Ps. cvi. 20) of a beautiful palace with its fine projectures, the shining points of its beauty. The comparison is of the simplest kind possible.—זן in ver. 13, kind, sort.—סבל in ver. 14 always means to bear, therefore in Pi., to

make to bear, to load, in Pü. to be laden. Oxen were not only used for ploughing, thrashing, and drawing, but also for bearing burdens, comp. 1 Chron. xii. 40, which passage is peculiarly fitted to throw light on the verse before us. Laden oxen presuppose a rich abundance of produce. The exposition: that our cattle may be prolific, vanishes before the one consideration, that אַלּוּף does not signify oxen or cattle in general, but only *taught* oxen. The rendering: that our princes might be upright, is quite arbitrary. Along with the sheep oxen are very fitly named, as in Ps. viii., but not princes; nor does אַלּוּף mean prince in general, but it is the peculiar designation of the Edomite princes, and occurs only in Zechariah, when the language had become dead, catachrestically in a general signification, ix. 7, xii. 5, 6—see Christol. there; the meaning of standing upright is taken from the air. What is said positively in the first member: All abundance and fulness, is said negatively in the second: no disastrous loss. פֶּרֶץ is never used of breaking in, but always of breaking, or breach in the passive sense, also in Job xvi. 14. Here, as in Judges xxi. 15, 2 Sam. vi. 8, breaking, rent, is = hurt; Geier: infortunium quo felicitatis nostræ integritas laceratur. *Nothing going out*, is, according to the connection with פֶּרֶץ, with which it forms a member, and according to the following, as much as, no diminution or loss. It is not allowable to supply a definite noun to it. *No cry*, over breach and diminution, comp. Is. xxiv. 11: "There is a cry over the (failing) wine on the streets."—The Epiphonem in ver. 15 rests upon Ps. xxxiii. 12. The relation of both members to each other, which is quite missed by Luther, who shoves in a *but* at the beginning of the second, is clear when one supplies at the end: for to those, with whom it thus goes well, though it may be through many tribulations, there shall be a blessed state at last. Ven.: "There is subjoined a celebration of the blessedness of a people rejoicing in these benefits, and, at the same time, the fountainhead of this felicity is indicated."

PSALM CXLV.

This Psalm is a song of thanksgiving and praise on the part of the house of David and the Church after all their tribulations

have come to a close. It is parallel to Ps. ciii. The Psalm is an alphabetical one, and hence the thoughts must be expressed from the first in the form of a close organization; they must not stand loosely in an alphabetical Psalm. The alphabetical arrangement is exact, excepting that the letter ב is entirely omitted. It scarcely deserves notice, that in the Alexandrine version this anomaly is removed by the introduction of a nun-strophe. From the whole character of that version, in general, and in particular that of the Psalms, it is at once manifest what is to be thought of this addition, of which none of the other ancient translations know any thing, the occasion for which also so readily occurred, and which was so cheaply obtained—being plainly borrowed from ver. 17, and the πιστός at the commencement from the nun-strophe of the alphabetical Ps. cxi. The ground of the anomaly is the same with that which occasioned the deviations from the alphabetical arrangement in Ps. xxxvii., which was also composed by David. Along with the alphabetical arrangement the Psalmist observed a division of the whole into three strophes, each of seven verses, and it was necessary, on this account, that one of the twenty-two letters of the alphabet should be left out. A break between from seven to seven verses manifestly has place, which is especially marked, at the end of the first seven verses.

To the three-number of the strophes corresponds the threefold three-number of the name of Jehovah, and in like manner the three-number of the glorious attributes of God celebrated by the Psalmist: greatness, goodness, righteousness.

In unison with the seven-number of the verses of each strophe, the Psalmist declares seven times the purpose of praising God's glory (six times in ver. 1–6, once in ver. 21). The declaration, that the pious shall praise the Lord, occurs ten times.

In the superscription: Praise-song of David, תְּהִלָּה stands only here as the designation of a Psalm employed in the superscription (corresponding to שִׁיר in Ps. lxviii. etc.), comp. Ps. xxxiii., in manifest reference to תְּפִלָּה in Ps. cxlii. supers. and cxliii. 1. In the kingdom of David there constantly follows on the תְּפִלָּה a תְּהִלָּה; upon the crying to the Lord out of deep distress, a giving praise and thanks to the Lord. The return of תְּהִלָּה in the concluding verse is a proof of the originality of the superscription,

of which, indeed, the delicate reference to the תפלה does not permit us to doubt.

Ver. 1–7.—Ver. 1. *I will extol thee, my God, thou king, and praise thy name for ever and ever.* Ver. 2. *Continually will I praise thee, and celebrate thy name for ever and ever.* Ver. 3. *Great is the Lord and very glorious, and his mighty deeds are unsearchable.* Ver. 4. *One race praises to another thy works, and thy mighty acts they proclaim.* Ver. 5. *Upon thy beautiful majesty and glory, and upon thy wonders will I meditate.* Ver. 6. *And of the terribleness of thy frightful deeds they speak, and thy wonderful works will I proclaim.* Ver. 7. *The memory of thy great goodness they celebrate, and rejoice over thy righteousness.* — On: I will extol thee, ver. 1, comp. Ps. xxx. 1: "I will extol thee, for thou hast lifted me up." The latter stands also here in the back-ground. On: thou king, *q. d.* thou, who truly art our king, thou who givest salvation to kings, and deliverest thy servant David, Ps. cxliv. 10, comp. Ps. xx. 10, xxiv. 8, 10, xxix. 9. Calvin: "By calling him his king, he compels himself and all earthly princes to keep their proper place, that no elevation of a worldly kind may obscure the glory of God." David feels it a happy thing for himself, that he not merely knows the address: thou king, but that he can use it for himself. He would despair, if it were not so with him. On the second member, comp. Ps. xxxiv. 1. The reference to the commencement of both Psalms is certainly not accidental. The expression: for ever and ever, has often been explained in an unsatisfactory way; Calvin: although he should live for many ages; Geier: as well in this as in the future life. The right view at once suggests itself, when it is perceived that David speaks here, not as an individual, but as the representative of his race. As such he has a security for everlasting continuance, for the perpetual enjoyment of the divine favour, comp. Ps. cxxxviii. 8; and so long as his being lasted in the loving-kindness of God, he must also continue to give praise.—On the first member of ver. 2, comp. Ps. lxviii. 19; on the second, Ps. lxix. 30.—In ver. 3, the rich meaning of the name of God is more nearly described. The first member is literally borrowed in Ps. xlviii. 1, and should there be marked as a quotation. Upon מהלל comp. on Ps. xviii. 3. On

גדלה, never greatness, always great, comp. on Ps. lxxi. 20; his great = his great deeds, corresponding to the works and the mighty deeds in ver. 4. On: unsearchable, comp. Ps. xl. 5: "I will declare and speak of them (thy wonders), they are not to be numbered."—The fut. in ver. 4, and also in ver. 6, 7, are to be taken according to ver. 10, 11, not as a designation of what should be done, but as a simple announcement of what is done. Allusion is made to the fulness and plenteousness of the deeds of God, and the powerful impulse lying therein to the constant celebration of praise. On the first member, comp. Ps. xix. 3. The *works* of God are here, as in ver. 17, the glorious displays of his mercy and righteousness.—On the first member of ver. 5, Geier: "By this accumulation of words, the incomparable glory and majesty of God is set forth." Remarks like the following: "In such a heaping up of synonymes, the poetical power shows itself to be sinking," are natural if one cannot sympathize with the thankful heart of David, and his striving after a suitable mode of expression for his exuberant feeling. But for its refutation, it is sufficient to point to Ps. xviii. 2, lxii. 7. In reference to the expression: the matters of wonder, comp. Ps. lxv. 6, cv. 27.—The Kri גדלתך, the singular, in ver. 6, has arisen from a comparison with ver. 3, and from the wrong impression, that גדלה means greatness. The correctness of the text is confirmed by the parallel נוראות; the expression: thy mighty deeds, points back to the beginning of ver. 3, and shows that the whole intermediate matter belongs to the idea of God's greatness. There follow then, in connection with this, the goodness and righteousness, in ver. 7; so that the three-number of the glorious properties of God celebrated in the Psalm, already fully appears in the first heptade, which bears a sort of introductory character.—The רב-טוב, in ver. 7, is a kind of compound noun: much-goodness. On טוב goodness = the essential goodness, the goodness of being in the Lord, comp. on Ps. xxv. 13. That the רב is an adjec. appears from Ps. xxxi. 19, Is. lxiii. 7. הביע prop. to cause to splutter forth, Ps. xix. 3, lix. 7. רנן with the accus. also elsewhere in David, Ps. lix. 16, li. 15.

Ver. 8–14.—Ver. 8. *Gracious and compassionate is the Lord, patient, and of great goodness.* Ver. 9. *Good is the Lord toward all, and is merciful in all his works.* Ver. 10. *Praise thee,*

Lord, all thy works, and thy saints bless thee. Ver. 11. *Of the honour of thy kingdom they speak, and talk of thy power.* Ver. 12. *In that they make known to the children of men his mighty deeds, and the glorious majesty of his kingdom.* Ver. 13. *Thy kingdom is an everlasting kingdom, and thy dominion lasts for ever and ever.* Ver. 14. *The Lord upholds all who fall, and raises up all the bowed down.*—On ver. 8, see Ps. ciii. 8. In place of the רב there, we have here גדול, with allusion to ver. 3 and ver. 6: to the greatness of God in the common sense = his almightiness, corresponds the greatness of his love. *Toward all*, ver. 9, how much more, therefore, toward his own, to whom the praise of the general goodness of God everywhere has respect. On the second member, comp. Ps. ciii. 13. *His works*, even the young ravens, Ps. cxlvii. 9, how much more, then, his works in the kingdom of grace, Ps. cxxxviii. 8, the kingdom of David set up by him.—*Praise thee*, ver. 10, either with the mouth, or at least through their very being, comp. Ps. xix. 2 ss., Ps. ciii. 22.—On: of thy kingdom, ver. 11, comp. Ps. ciii. 19. The kingdom of God is his government of the world. The glory of it becomes especially conspicuous in this, that he raises the dominion of his anointed over all the kingdoms of the world, comp. Ps. cxxxviii. 6.—*Thy kingdom is a kingdom of all eternities*, ver. 13, and so must also the kingdom of thine anointed be an eternal one, and will survive all the transitory kingdoms of this world, however highly they may puff themselves up. On this passage rests Dan. iii. 33, iv. 31, where Nebuchadnezzar repeats what he had received from Daniel, the zealous inquirer into the import of the ancient scriptures, comp. ix. 2. On the first member of ver. 14, comp. Ps. xxxvii. 17, 24. The two partic. supply the place of nouns, from which the ל is to be explained, more rare than the accus., which was put in the late imitation, Ps. cxlvi. 8. *All that fall, all the bowed down*, that is, among the righteous.

Ver. 15–21.—Ver. 15. *All eyes wait on thee, and thou givest them their food in its season.* Ver. 16. *Thou openest thine hand, and satisfiest all living with what they wish.* Ver. 17. *Righteous is the Lord in all his ways, and holy in all his works.* Ver. 18. *Nigh is the Lord to all who call upon him, to all who call upon him in truth.* Ver. 19. *He does what they that fear God desire, and hears their cry, and helps them.* Ver. 20. *The Lord pre-*

serves all who love him, and all the wicked he destroys. Ver. 21. *The praise of the Lord shall my mouth speak, and all flesh shall praise his holy name for ever and ever.*—Ver. 15 is almost literally borrowed in Ps. civ. 27. The *all* is of his works or creatures, ver. 9, all living, ver. 16. How can he, who fills all desire on earth, allow his elect to wait on him in vain?—To רצון, in ver. 16, corresponds in the dependant passage, Ps. civ. 28, "they are satisfied with food," the טוב; the former, therefore, must also denote that with which they are satisfied—comp. besides Ps. ciii. 5. That we must explain: with wish = that which they wish, is manifest from ver. 19, a passage which we may the rather bring into comparison, as here also the proper regard is directed toward the fearers of God: how can he, who satisfies all with what they wish (comp. Acts xiv. 17, "filling our hearts with food and gladness") abandon those who fear him? The ground-passage is in Deut. xxxiii. 23: "Naphthali is satisfied with what he wished," שבע רצון, where, according to the general tenor of the words there spoken, that is specially applied to a particular part of God's people, which holds good of the whole.—On חסיד, ver. 17, comp. on Ps. iv. 3. The *love* of God towards his own is rooted in his *righteousness*, according to which he gives to every one his own; and remarks such as those of Geier: "let the wonderful intermingling of the divine justice and mercy be noted," miss the right point. It is not according to the Biblical mode of contemplation to think presently of a punishment, as soon as one hears of righteousness. On ver. 18 comp. Ps. xxxiv. 18, 6. The *truth* forms a contrast to lies, semblance, hypocrisy; it is the true, internal, and heartfelt righteousness.—On ver. 19, comp. Ps. xxxiv. 15, xxxvii. 40. In the place of those who fear the Lord, in ver. 19, come in ver. 20, those who love him, to shew that the fear is not of a slavish, but of a childlike sort.

PSALM CXLVI.

It is happy for Israel that he trusts, not like the heathen upon men, but upon the Lord his God, ver. 1–5, for God alone can and will help, he is a deliverer of the poor and needy, and governs for ever, ver. 6–10. The whole number of verses, ten, is divided by

the five. The predicates of God are twelve, four times three. The name Jehovah occurs thrice in the first half, thrice in ver. 7, and thrice in the remaining verses of the second half.

That this Psalm forms the close of the dodecade, beginning with Ps. cxxxv., has already been mentioned.[a] That it is not contemporaneous with the immediately preceding Davidic Psalm, with which it is placed in intentional connection through the borrowing here in ver. 8, of ver. 14 there, but was only set next to it in order, is clear from the ceasing of what is so usual there, the resting on the Davidic Psalms, and from the traces it contains of a late post-exile period—the halleluiah, which is never found in Psalms that bear the name of David—comp. Introd. to Ps. civ., where it first occurs, and Ps. cv., the borrowing of ver. 1 and 2 from Ps. civ., which was composed after the exile, and of ver. 3 from Ps. cxviii., which was sung at the laying of the foundation of the second temple. That the Psalm was composed in a period of depression for the people of God, is indicated by the predicates given to God, which are all of a kind fitted to elevate the distressed, to console the afflicted, and give them confidence in their God. The right view regarding the time of composition was already recognized by the LXX. in their: Haggaei et Sachariae, which both the Vulgate and the Syriac repeat. Still, much stress cannot be laid on this, as they give the same superscription also to the following Psalms.

Ver 1–5.—Ver. 1. *Halleluiah. Praise, my soul, the Lord.* Ver. 2. *I will praise the Lord, while I live, play to my God, so long as I am in being.* Ver. 3. *Trust not in princes, in the son of man, in whom there is no salvation.* Ver. 4. *Goes his breath forth, then he returns back to his earth, on the same day his thoughts perish.* Ver. 5. *Happy he, whose help is the God of Jacob, whose hope is in the Lord his God.*—As the halleluiah, so also the expression: praise the Lord, my soul, in ver. 1, is taken from Ps. civ. Ver. 2 also rests upon ver. 33 of that Psalm.—On ver. 3 comp. Ps. cxviii. 8, 9. According to this fundamental passage, the princes are to be regarded as heathenish, the possessors of the world's power; and the address is not directed to Israel, who rather appears here as the speaker, but to the world, comp. Ps. lxxv. 4, 5. A dissuasion from something, to which the Israel-

[a] See at p. 542.

ites from the circumstances of the time had no temptation, has also an unnatural appearance. In the second member the folly of confidence in princes is shewn by allusion to the evanescent species of beings to which they belong, however loftily they may carry themselves. *In whom there is no salvation*, neither for themselves, nor for others: man, be he beggar or king, has no salvation in himself, but must first receive it from above—comp. Ps. cxliv. 10.—On ver. 4 compare Ps. civ. 29: "Thou gatherest their breath, then they expire, and return again to their dust." The reference to this passage is put beyond a doubt by the peculiar expression: to his earth. According to this fundamental passage we are not to explain: it goes forth, but goes forth. The thoughts which go to the grave with the dying man, are his vain projects. Calvin: "Like that frenzied Macedonian Alexander, when he heard there were more worlds, wept that he had not yet obtained the mastery of one, but shortly afterwards had to content himself with a sarcophagus." With the descent to the grave perishes also the hope placed on him.—*Happy he*, ver. 5, = happy I, in opposition to the world. The בעזרו is to be explained, according to the fundamental passage, Ps. cxviii. 7: under his help, for, among the number of his helpers. אל properly strength, in contradistinction to human weakness and evanescence.

Ver. 6–10.—Ver. 6. *Who made heaven and earth, the sea and all that therein is, who truth keeps eternally.* Ver. 7. *Who executes judgment for those who suffer oppression, who gives bread to the hungry. The Lord looses the prisoners.* Ver. 8. *The Lord opens the eyes of the blind, the Lord raises up the bowed down, the Lord loves the righteous.* Ver. 9. *The Lord protects the strangers, widow and orphan he raises up, and the way of the wicked he bends.* Ver. 10. *The Lord reigns eternally, thy God, Zion, for ever and ever. Halleluiah.*—With ver. 6 begins the grounding of the אשרי in allusion to what the Lord is to his own, and grants to them, first by unfolding that which is contained in "the God (strength) of Jacob, and Jehovah *his God*"—his power to help them, according to his almightiness, as displayed in the creation of the world, against the sheer impotence of the highest earthly powers—and then his will. The latter is pledged to the people, to whom he has given such precious declarations and such glorious promises, through his truth—comp. on

Ps. lxxxv. 10.—On the first member of ver. 7 comp. Ps. ciii. 6. By the persons oppressed is meant here also, his own people in all their oppressions. On the second member comp. Ps. xxxvii. 19, cvii. 5, 9. The *hungry* represent generally all who stand in need of help. Those in prison or chains are such in the proper sense, and those also who are in the prison of distress, Ps. cvii. 10.—The first member of ver. 8 alludes to Isa. xxxv. 5. To open the blind, stands here for, to open their eyes, which comes the more naturally out, as. פקח is most commonly used of the eyes (according to Stier twenty-one times.) The blind are the naturally blind, and such as cannot discern the way of salvation, without wisdom and help; blindness occurs as an image of want of wisdom and support in Deut. xxviii. 29, Isa. lix. 10, Job xii. 15. The second member is from Ps. cxlv. 14.—In reference to the stranger, the widow and the orphan as representatives of persons in a miserable condition, ver. 9, comp. on Ps. lxviii. 6, 7. In the background stands: and therefore also his poor people. The *way* is the lot, the fate, comp. on Ps. i. 6. *He bends their lot, q. d.*, he transfers them into a depressed condition.—It is by no means accidental, that ver. 10 begins with the tenth letter of the alphabet. The first member is taken from Ex. xv. 18. The everlasting kingdom of God is presented, in contrast to the short continuance of the kingdoms of this world. The people who have such a king, can already behold great realities, and should not presently sink into despair, if all does not go according to their wish. All's well that ends well.

PSALMS CXLVII.—CL.

That the four following Psalms constitute one whole, is clear from the Halleluiah at the beginning and the close of each of them, by which they also connect themselves with the close of the preceding cycle; from their entirely joyful tone without any background of lamentation, in contradistinction to all the other Psalms belonging to the period after the exile, a tone to which the Psalms before us were directed, both from their position and their whole character and contents; from the peculiar combination of the

praise of God in nature, with the praise of his grace toward his people; finally, from the circumstance of their being throughout pervaded by a reference to a great salvation, which restores Israel.

The starting point shines out with the utmost clearness in Ps. cxlvii., which opens the cycle. The establishment of Jerusalem and its security toward what is without, appears there as the occasion. In Ps. cxlviii. 14, it is the elevation of the people and the invigoration of their courage. In Ps. cxlix. we are told of a great salvation, which the Lord grants to his people. This Psalm and the following one proclaim their destination to be sung on the occasion of a great festival of thanksgiving and joy in the temple.

All these references find their explanation when it is understood that the Psalms in question were composed for the consecration of the walls under Nehemiah, of which Neh. treats in ch. xii. What Jerusalem was before Nehemiah—an open, thinly inhabited village, exposed to all manner of insults from the neighbouring people—and how much Judah owed of its greatness to the favour obtained through his interposition, has already been set forth at length in my Christol. Th. ii., s. 524, ss. Supposing, then, that these Psalms belong to the age of Nehemiah, we can easily understand how the tone of lamentation should at once disappear from them, which through all the earlier post-exile Psalms intermingles even with the joy; here again the people shew themselves right glad of their existence. The connection of the point displayed in Ps. cxlviii., the invigoration of the courage of the people and the elevation of their state, with the erection of walls mentioned in Ps. cxlvii., is rendered plain by Neh. i. 3: "The remnant are in great affliction and reproach, and the wall of Jerusalem is broken through, and its gates are burnt with fire;" where their "being in great affliction and reproach," and "the walls being broken through and the gates burnt," stand to each other in the relation of effect and cause—comp. also Neh. ii. 17, where the building of the walls of Jerusalem, and their being no longer in reproach, are placed in causal connection; then also ch. vi. 15, 16, where the completion of the building of the walls is represented as to its effect on the surrounding people: "And the wall was finished—and when all our enemies heard thereof, all the heathen, which were around us, were afraid, and

their courage failed them, for they perceived that this work was of God."

On the supposition of that being the occasion we can also understand the warlike tone, which meets us in Ps. cxlix. It was at the building of the walls that Judah again, for the first time after the Babylonian catastrophe and with good success, drew the sword against the heathen. At the same time this Psalm throws light on the origin of reports among the heathen, such as those mentioned in Nehemiah vi. 6, 7.—With Ps. cxlvi. the prayer of the Levites in Neh. ix. 6, remarkably coincides: "Thou hast made heaven, the heaven of heavens, with all their host, the earth and all that is therein, the sea and all that is therein; and thou preservest all, and the host of heaven worships thee." With Ps. cxlvii. 19, comp. Neh. ix. 13, 14, x. 29. With Neh. xii. 27: "And at the dedication of the walls of Jerusalem they sought the Levites from all places, and brought them to Jerusalem, to keep the dedication in gladness with thanksgiving, with singing, with *cymbals*, *harps*, and *psalteries*," comp. Ps. cxlvii. 7, cl., where all the three instruments are mentioned. Also with ver. 35 and 41, according to which at the feast of dedication the trumpets were blown by the priests, comp. Ps. cl. 3. The joyful and exulting tone of the four Psalms finds its commentary in Neh. xii. 43, "And they offered on that day great sacrifices, and rejoiced, for God had given them great joy, and also the women and children rejoiced themselves, so that the joy of Jerusalem was heard even afar off."

[By some oversight, the general Introduction to Ps. cxxxv.–cxlvi. was omitted at its proper place, and we therefore give it here at the close of the cycle.]

We have now a group of twelve Psalms, sung after the prosperous completion of the temple, and probably at its dedication, consisting of three *new* Psalms at the beginning, and one at the end, Ps. cxlvi., which enclose in the middle eight Psalms of David.

The extremities of the group are pointedly marked by the circumstance of the first and the last Psalm in it, having Halleluiah at the beginning and the end, and also from the first and the last

Psalm being otherwise very strikingly related to each other at the beginning and the end. That the eight Psalms marked with the name of David cannot stand here, in an isolated and independent state, but must have been arranged into a cycle of a later period, is clear from the express declaration of the collector, after Ps. lxxii., according to which no more Psalms of David were to be expected in a separate or independent form. And that the author of this cycle has not satisfied himself with prefixing a trilogy of new Psalms for these Psalms of David, but that Ps. cxlvi. also forms a component part of the cycle, is already clear, even apart from the manifest and intentional connection which Ps. cxlvi. has with Ps. cxlv., from the fact, that all the other mixed groups (Ps. ci.–vii., Ps. cviii.–xix., Ps. cxx.–xxxiv.) supply at the close a testimony from the present.

The tendency to console and elevate the people of God, is common to the whole group. In Ps. cxxxv., cxxxvi., this is done by pointing to the glorious deeds of God in nature and history, which guarantee the return of prosperity to Israel. Ps. cxxxvii. quickens the hope of the already-begun execution of God's judgment upon the enemies; Ps. cxlvi. presents the Lord as the almighty and faithful helper of his suffering people. It is common to the two first Psalms, and the last Psalm of the group, that the consolation and the encouragement are administered in the form of *praise to God.* The intermediate Davidic Psalms place the glorious promise made to David, and along with him also to the people, of the everlasting kingdom of his seed in the fore-ground, accompany the seed of David and the people in a consolatory style, through the assaults of the world, which threatened to bring the promise to nought, and conclude with a solemn: Lord God, we praise thee, on account of its final, glorious verification. No period was more suitable for the appropriation of this Davidic cycle of Psalms, than that in which the Davidic stem was, poorly enough, represented by Zerubbabel, whose humbled condition also gave occasion to the prophets of that period, Haggai and Zechariah, to lay a firmer and deeper hold on the rich promises given to the race of David. For the more exact determination of the time, see what is said on Ps. cxxxvii.

PSALM CXLVII.

The peculiar object of this song of praise and thanksgiving are the acts of kindness which the Lord had just imparted to his people. Other proofs, however, of the glory of God were also drawn into the circle of praise, because the particular receives its proper elucidation only from its connection with the whole, the soul also rising to its right elevation only when it comes to contemplate the great whole.

The Psalm consists of two decades. The one, divided by five, is contained in ver. 2–11. The second is formed by the three verses of the introduction and conclusion, ver. 1, and ver. 19, 20, and by a strophe of seven verses, divided by three and four, ver. 12–18. Jah and Jehovah occur seven times.

The historical circumstances which the Psalm presents are the following:—the people are gathered from the dispersion, ver. 2; Jerusalem is built, ver. 2; fortified and secured against all hostile assaults, ver. 13, 14. Against the supposition of its belonging to the time of the Maccabees, though ver. 13 and 14, even by themselves considered, could hardly be explained from 1 Mac. xiii. 10, the connection in which the fortification of Jerusalem stands here with the gathering of the people from their dispersion, is at all events decisive. Such a connection only existed in the time of Nehemiah (already Grotius: optime congruit in tempora Nehemiæ): the leading of God, which began with the bringing back of the people, and which is brought into notice here only at the beginning, but does not form a part of the circumstances that properly gave rise to the Psalm, as represented in ver. 12-14, reached its conclusion in the erection of the walls under Nehemiah (the city had first to be built by him again, comp. Neh. ii. 5, where Nehemiah said to Artaxerxes: "Send me to Judah, to the city of the sepulchres of my fathers, that I may build it.") In the time of the Maccabees, the return from the exile lay much too far back for being drawn within the circle of this song. We therefore need not fall back on the general grounds, which decide against the composition of any Psalms in the time of the Maccabees.[a]

[a] Let ver. 2 and ver. 13 and 14 of this Psalm be compared with Jesus Sirach xlix. 13:

Ver. 1. *Halleluiah; for it is good to sing praise to our God, because he is lovely, praise becomes.* Three commencements of Psalms are here intentionally brought together. The first member rests on Ps. xcii. 1, the beginning of the second on Ps. cxxxv. 3, "Praise the Lord, for the Lord is good, sing praise to his name, for he is lovely" (comp. on the *loveliness* of the Lord at Ps. xxvii. 4), and the last words are from Ps. xxxiii. 1, "Rejoice ye righteous in the Lord, to the upright becomes praise." The explanation: because this (the singing) lovely, praise is comely, overlooks the second original passage, cuts up in an unseemly manner the second member, and supposes that the second כי is co-ordinate with the first—a supposition about which one must be very cautious. זמרה inf. Pi. with ה parag.; זמר to celebrate in song, as in Ps. vii. 17.

Ver. 2–6.—Ver. 2. *The Lord builds Jerusalem, gathers the scattered of Israel.* Ver. 3. *He, who heals those that are broken in heart, and binds up their pains.* Ver. 4. *He determines the number of the stars, he names them all by name.* Ver. 5. *Great is our Lord and rich in power, and incomprehensible is his understanding.* Ver. 6. *The Lord lifts up the meek, and brings down the wicked to the ground.*—The Psalmist begins, in ver. 2, immediately with his proper subject, what the Lord had done to his church. The second member rests upon Is. xi. 12, lvi. 8. What the prophet had foretold of the then still far off dispersion, and of the gathering out of it, which was still farther off, now stands fulfilled before their eyes; comp. Ps. cvii. 3. At the close of the salvation-period, as it began with the deliverance from exile, and ended with the setting up of the walls under Nehemiah, the whole of the salvation wrought for the people of God passed before the thankful soul.—On ver. 3 comp. Ps. xxxiv. 18, ciii. 3, Is. lxi. 1. What is spoken apparently in quite general terms receives its limitation to the people of the Lord by its connection with what precedes, on which it already formally leans. The pains are spiritual wounds.—In ver. 4, the Psalmist turns from the consideration of the work of God on earth to heaven, so that God might be more clearly recognised in the former,

"Nehemias, whose renown is great, who raised up for us the walls that were fallen down, and set up the gates and the bars, and raised up our ruins again;"—a passage which plainly seems to allude to ver. 13 of the Psalm.

that the thanks given to him might be the more cordial, and the hope of his future salvation might be more deeply rooted. That the Psalmist has properly and alone to do with that which the Lord had accomplished for his people, and what they had further to expect from him, is evident alone from the way and manner, in which here, what refers to the power of God in nature, is compassed round by that which arises from his relation to his people. מנה stands here as in Gen. xiii. 16, Numb. xxiii, 10 (see my work on Balaam, p. 91 ss.), Is. lxv. 12, in the original sig. of *determining*, which is demanded by the מספר, that excludes the sig. of *numbering*. Still, however, the discourse is not here of the determination of the number of the stars before their creation, but of the numbering of those that have been made, which, according to Gen. xv. 5, alluded to here, lies beyond the province of the human mind. Beside the numbering stands the *naming*, which presupposes an intimate acquaintance with the peculiar properties of each star, of which the name is the reflex. The original foundation of the whole passage is in Is. xl. 26, "Who brings out, numbers their host, calls them all by names, on account of the fulness of his power, and because he is mighty in strength, not one is missing." As there allusion is made to the Lord's relation to the stars for the purpose of consoling his afflicted people—comp. ver. 27, "Why sayest thou, O Jacob, my way is hid from the Lord," &c.—so here it is mentioned with the view of raising the spirit of thanksgiving among the redeemed.—On ver. 5, comp. besides Is. xl. 26, also ver. 28, "unsearchable is his understanding." The understanding of God comes here into consideration so far, as in consequence of it he ever has at command an infinite fulness of ways and means for helping his own.

Ver. 7–11.—Ver. 7. *Answer to the Lord with a song of praise, play to our God on the psaltery.* Ver. 8. *Who covers the heaven with clouds, who prepares rain for the earth, who makes grass to grow on the mountains.* Ver. 9. *Who gives to the beast his fodder, to the young ravens that cry.* Ver. 10. *He has not delight in the strength of the horse, nor pleasure in the legs of a man.* Ver. 11. *The Lord has pleasure in those that fear him, those who wait on his mercy.*—All here is spoken in celebration of the Lord's mercy, which manifests itself thus also in respect of

his church. But she roams, in seeking for proofs of the mercy she has received from the Lord, through the whole circle of his benevolent agency, which extends even to the smallest of his creatures, so that the feeling may be more deeply impressed, and along with thanksgiving hope also invigorated. But the whole runs out in praise of the Lord's loving-kindness toward his own, in like manner as all had proceeded from him. *Answer* (comp. on Ps. cxix. 172) *to the Lord*, who has addressed us in so friendly a manner by bestowing on us his salvation.—The clouds are referred to in ver. 8 only in so far as they produce the rain, which is one of the instruments of blessing. In regard to the question: why precisely the mountains are mentioned, comp. on the original passage, Ps. civ. 13.—On the first member of ver. 9 comp. Ps. civ. 14, 27, 28. The young ravens are introduced here, partly as being creatures of an unprofitable and disagreeable kind, partly on account of their croaking (Bochart: corvus vocem clamosam habet et obstreperam tanquam importuni flagitatoris), which seems to call upon the heavenly Provider for help. We must not translate exactly with Luther: who call upon him; however, the croaking should certainly be regarded as a sort of unconscious crying to the Creator for help, comp. Job xxxviii. 41, where the young ravens cry to God, Ps. civ. 21, cxlv. 15.—Ver. 10 and 11 rest upon Ps. xxxiii. 16–18. The horse stands here, as there, as a representation of the kind, over against him man. *In the legs of a man*, and their strength, this is to be supplied from the first member—comp. also: through his great strength, in Ps. xxxiii. 16. How glorious is God's loving-kindness! In contrast to the world, which expends its love only on the strong, from whom it can expect recompense and returns of favour, he has no pleasure in the heathen world ever boastful of its might, but in Israel prostrated on the ground in its impotence, yet looking with the eye of faith to him, that he will lift it up from its depression in the dust, as he had already begun to do—comp. ver. 12 ss.

Ver. 12-17.—Ver. 12. *Praise, Jerusalem, the Lord; praise Zion, thy God.* Ver. 13. *For he has strengthened the bars of thy gates, blessed thy children within them.* Ver. 14. *Who makes peace in thy borders, satisfies thee with the fat of the wheat.* Ver 15. *Who sends his discourse upon the earth, his word runs very quickly.* Ver. 16. *Who gives snow like wool, hoar-frost*

scatters like ashes. Ver. 17. *He casts forth his ice like morsels, who can stand before his frost?* Ver. 18. *He sends out his word, and causes it to melt, makes his wind blow, then the waters flow.*—In ver. 13 and 14 first security in respect to what is without, then the blessing within. On ver. 14 comp. Ps. lxxxi. 16. In ver. 15–18 there is probably not only an allusion to the omnipotence of God as manifested in nature not less than in the government of his people, but at the same time an allegorical representation of this government, so that the Psalmist perceived in the operations of God in nature the image of his administration in grace—in the snow, hoar-frost and frost, an image of the now no longer existing time of trouble, in the spring, ver. 18, an image of the returning salvation; comp. the similar figurative representations in Ps. cvii. In ver. 15, the discourse and word of God are represented as servants, which he sends upon the earth to execute his will. Their quick course marks the speedy result of what takes place in the will.—The comparison denotes, in ver. 16, 17, generally the ease with which God accomplishes the greatest things, not otherwise than man the least, such as causing some locks of wool to fly, or scattering a few ashes. Those things are taken which present some kind of resemblance to the snow, hoar-frost, and ice. The great flakes of ice are compared with the morsels of bread which man throws out to his domestic animals. The question: Who can stand before his frost? Israel had known to put from painful experience. The suff. in יִמְסֵם, ver. 18, refers to the snow, the hoar-frost, and the ice. The wind is the thawing breeze.

Ver. 19. *He declares to Jacob his word, to Israel his statutes and judgments.* Ver. 20. *He has done so to no heathen, and judgments know they not. Halleluiah.*—This epiphonem points to the ground of the special care which God exercised over Israel, which had now again manifested itself. Israel was the people of the Revelation, the only people on the broad earth which stood under the supremacy of the divine will, as expressed by way of command in the laws of Moses. The heathen knew not, as they did, any rights, and hence were without God, ver. 20. For what they called by that name was only the shadow of that which really deserved it, a sad mixture of right and wrong.

PSALM CXLVIII.

The occasion of the Psalm is brought distinctly out in its conclusion. According to this, it was called forth by a great act of divine beneficence, whereby God had raised his people from the dust of depression, and filled them anew with power and energy. The grateful hearts of the people were thus opened to all other manifestations of the glory of God, and they praise him in the manner, that he ought to be glorified, for all that in heaven and on earth bears the traces of his glory. In respect to heaven, commencement is made with the angels, and then, passing through the intermediate stage of the stars, the clouds are at last discoursed of. In respect to the earth, the Psalmist begins with the deepest parts, the sea, the more appropriately, as, in the first part, the waters above the earth had last been spoken of; then he ascends up to the highest, to the manifestations in the region of air, ver. 8, whence he again descends to the earth, beginning at the highest point, the mountains, and last of all discourses of man.

The Psalm consists of a main part of twelve verses, divided by six, containing the call addressed to all creatures to praise God, and a conclusion of two verses, announcing the occasion of the Psalm; so that the whole consists of fourteen verses. The call to praise God is delivered in all twelve times, in the first part nine times, three times three, and in the first verse three times.

Ver. 1–6.—Ver. 1. *Hallelujah. Praise the Lord from the heavens, praise him in the heights.* Ver. 2. *Praise him, all his angels, praise him, all his hosts.* Ver. 3. *Praise him, sun and moon, praise him, all shining stars.* Ver. 4. *Praise him, ye highest heavens, and ye waters which are above the heavens.* Ver. 5. *Let them praise the name of the Lord, for he commanded, and they were created.* Ver. 6. *And he established them for ever and ever, gave them a law which they never transgress.* To the expression: from the heaven, in ver. 1, stands opposed that in ver. 7: from the earth. It primarily determines only the place from whence the praise must issue; the persons celebrating the praise are first described more nearly afterwards.—*The hosts of God*, in ver. 2, are the sun, moon, and stars, which in ver. 3 are in-

dividually named—comp. on Ps. ciii. 21. In the first member the spiritual, in the second the materal portion of the heavenly servants of God is given. The latter praise God through their very being—comp. on Ps. ciii. 21. The only thing peculiar here is the call to praise God. But this merely expresses the satisfaction of the Psalmist regarding that, which is done at any rate. —The heavens of heavens in ver. 4, just as in Deut. x. 14, 1 Kings viii. 27, where they are named by way of gradation beside the heavens generally, Ps. lxviii. 33, Neh. ix. 6, are the highest heavens. The explanation: ye heavens everywhere, Luther: "all heavenly regions, however vast and infinite," Maurer, has no justification in the *usus loquendi*. We have the less reason for setting aside the allusion here to a gradation in the heavenly regions—comp. 2 Cor. xii. 2—since an indirect one already lies in the mention made of the angels, the stars, and the clouds, which cannot properly be ascribed to one and the same region. *The waters above the heavens* can only be, according to the original passage, Gen. i. 7, the clouds—comp. on Ps. civ. 3. Of other heavenly waters scripture knows nothing; they know nothing of the "celestial fire-watery ether." If, therefore, we hold it as certain, that in the first member, the highest heavens are mentioned, in the second, the clouds, we must also hold, that the parallelism is not a mere synonym, but that the highest regions of heaven and the lowest are set in opposition to each other. The mere heaven, as contradistinguished from the highest heaven, can only be the lower heaven.—Those, who must praise the Lord, are six, in unison with the number of verses in the half strophe. In ver. 5, 6, reference is made to the grounds on account of which they should praise.—The first member of ver. 6 excludes all change in what has been made, that would be contrary to the will of the Creator, from whom the different parts of creation can never emancipate themselves to all eternity—comp. on Ps. cii. 27. On the second member comp. Job xxxviii. 10: "And I gave it (the sea) an unchangeable law, and set bars and bolts;" and Job xiv. 5, where, in regard to the period of man's life, it is said: "thou hast made his law, which he does not transgress." From allusion to the latter passage, it is probable, that the singular עבור has arisen, in which the parts of creation mentioned are united into one whole. The *law* is, according to these parallel passages, the

sphere of being, which is appointed to each part of creation, and in which it is held by the divine omnipotence; as, for example, the stars must pursue their course, the upper and lower waters must remain continually distinct. In regard to the reference of לֹא יַעֲבוֹר to the several parts of creation, comp. besides Ps. civ. 9, Jer. v. 22.

Ver. 7–12.—Ver. 7. *Praise the Lord from the earth ye whales and all floods.* Ver. 8. *Fire and hail, snow and smoke, stormy wind which fulfils his word.* Ver. 9. *Mountains and all hills, fruit-trees and all cedars.* Ver. 10. *Wild beast and all cattle, creeping things and all feathered fowls.* Ver. 11. *Kings of the earth and all peoples, princes, and all judges of the earth.* Ver. 12. *Young men with young women, old with young.*—Those, who should praise the Lord in the water and the air, are seven; those upon the land are four times four—the four being the signature of the earth.—In reference to תַּנִּינִים in ver. 7, comp. on Ps. lxxiv. 13. The reason of their being named in particular, is, that by their gigantic size they more especially proclaim the omnipotence of God's creative power. The same end is served by the description of leviathan in the Book of Job.—In ver. 8 fire and smoke, which elsewhere are inseparably united, are separated, in order to give to the fire as its attendant the cold hail, and to the dark smoke the white snow. The accompaniment to the fire shews, that by the fire we are not to understand lightning, which would besides have been more closely described. קִיטוֹר is in accordance with the accompaniment of the fire, with Gen. xix. 28, Ps. cxix. 83, and with the sig. of the verb, the common smoke, not fog, nor vapour,—as if the Psalm had been written in Westphalia! The *stormy wind*, which, with all its wild impetuosity, that apparently obeys no rule and no law, still executes the commands of God not less than the angels, Ps. ciii. 20.—The *cedars* are named in ver. 9, because they especially proclaim the creative power of God through their greatness and majesty; on which account they are called the cedars of God in Ps. lxxx. 10.—Kings are named in ver. 11 at the head of men, because God has especially glorified himself in them. But they are not alone a living proof of the greatness of God, rather *all*, down even to the least, shew forth his glory.—The *old*, ver. 12, in whose long life is con-

tained a series of proofs of the divine greatness, the *young*, whose fresh vigour is a matter-of-fact praise of God.

Ver. 13–19.—Ver. 13. *Let them praise the name of the Lord, for his name alone is extolled, with his splendour earth and heaven are crowned.* Ver. 14. *And he lifted up the horn of his people, the renown of all his saints, the children of Israel, the people that is near to him. Halleluiah.*—The expression in ver. 13: earth and heaven, shews that the injunction: let them praise him, belongs not merely to ver. 7–12, but to ver. 1–12; comp. Ps. civ. 27. On the second member comp. Ps. viii. 2.—*He lifted up the horn of his people*, ver. 14, which before was sunk in the dust, Job xvi. 15, comp. on Ps. xcii. 10. Instead of: he lifted up the renown of all his saints, which till now had been covered with shame, Luther falsely: all his saints must praise. The expression: the people that is near him, comp. Lev. x. 3, Ezek. xlii. 13, furnishes the ground of the divine goodness, as in Ps. cxlvii. ver. 19, 20. The people, that is near him, may indeed be left by the Lord for a short period, but he must constantly receive them again in his great goodness.

PSALM CXLIX.

The Psalmist calls the people, in ver. 1–5, to thanksgiving for a great deliverance which they had experienced, and expresses, in ver. 6–9, the hope of a future victory over the slavish heathen world, rising on the ground of their present strength and elevation.—The Psalm consists of an introduction of one verse, and two strophes, each of four verses. The Jehovah and Jah occur four times.

Ver. 1. *Halleluiah. Sing to the Lord a new song, his renown in the congregation of the saints.—His renown*, which he has acquired by raising the renown of his saints, Ps. cxlviii. 14. The beginning of the Psalm, therefore, purposely joins itself to the close of the preceding one.

Ver. 2–5.—Ver. 2. *Let Israel rejoice in his Maker, the children of Zion be joyful in their king.* Ver. 3. *Let them praise his name in the dance, with timbrel and psaltery play to him.*

Ver. 4. *For the Lord has pleasure in his people, he adorns the meek with salvation.* Ver. 5. *Let the saints be joyful in honour, exult upon their beds.*—*His Maker*, ver. 2, who has proved himself to be such in giving deliverance. That עניים, ver. 4, signifies not afflicted, but, as always *meek*, is clear from the opposite to it, the *wicked*, in Ps. cxlvii. 6. On רוצה, comp Ps. cxlvii. 10, 11. The expression: in honour, in ver. 5, marks, as in Ps. cxii. 9, the state that had given rise to the joy. The honour in which they now rejoiced, forms the contrast to the shame with which they had hitherto been covered, Neh. i. 3, and Neh. iii. 36. *Upon their beds*, where before in the loneliness of night they consumed themselves with grief for their shame, comp. Hos. vii. 14.

Ver. 6-9.—Ver. 6. *The praises of God in their mouth, and a two-edged sword in their hand.* Ver. 7. *That they may execute vengeance on the heathen, punishment among the people.* Ver. 8. *To bind their kings with chains, and their nobles with fetters of iron.* Ver. 9. *That they may execute upon them the judgment whereof it is written. Such honour have all his saints. Halleluiah.* רומם in ver. 6, praise, song of praise, as in Ps. lxvi. 17. As formerly at the work—comp. Neh. iv. 11: "with the one hand they did their work, and with the other they held the sword"—so now also after the completion of the work they still carried weapons in their hand while giving thanks and praise. Neh. xii. 31 ss., gives notice of a great military procession to the temple at the consecration of the walls.—*That they may execute vengeance*, ver. 7, namely, as God wishes it to be done and at the time appointed. Israel had experienced a great deliverance, but his state was still far from that which became the people of God and was promised them. They were still servants in the land, which the Lord had given to their fathers, that they might eat its fruit and enjoy its food—compare the description in Neh. ix. 36, 37. The new elevation of the people's consciousness, in which for the first time, after a long period, the warrior spirit was again revived, filled them now with a hope that rose superior to present appearances, the hope of dissipating what still remained of evil in their condition. This hope, legitimate in every respect, and, as to its substance, resting upon an everlasting foundation (for the people of God can never in the nature of things continue long in

a servile condition), which is sufficient to put to shame our pusillanimity, primarily received, as it was certainly meant to have its primary fulfilment in an external manner, an external fulfilment in the time of the Maccabees, the proceedings of which had their root in what had been done by Nehemiah. Unspeakably more glorious, however, and beyond what they themselves understood, was the vengeance which Israel exercised in the days of the Messiah, when they took the sword of the spirit in their hand, and thereby prevailed over their heathen neighbours. The earlier external revenge, as Calvin suggests, was but a shadowy prelude to this. *The judgment whereof it is written*, ver. 9, not in Deut. vii. 2, for the passage refers to the entirely peculiar relation to the Canaanites, but in Deut. xxxii. 41 ss., where the discourse is of the judgment, which the Lord would execute upon the future oppressors of his people, after the period of chastisement had gone by. There, as here, mention is made of judgment, of vengeance, and of the sword. The conclusion, like the beginning, brings to the remembrance the close of the preceding Psalm. An honour is this still more glorious than the renown which they already enjoyed—the second half, as it were, of that.

PSALM CL.

We have here a full-toned call to the praise of God, quite appropriate to the close of this Psalm-cycle and of the whole Psalter, in which, especially toward the end, in the Psalms belonging to the time of Israel's depression, the praise of God forms the predominating element. The Psalm falls into three strophes, each of two verses. In the first strophe the discourse is, of where praise is to be given, in heaven and on earth, and on what account, because of the greatness of God, and his glorious deeds; then, in the second and third strophe, *wherewith*, viz., with all that has sound and voice. In unison with the three-number of the strophes stands the three-number of Jah. The הַלְלוּ, praise, occurs twelve times; the instruments of the praise of God are ten, three in ver. 3, four in ver. 4, three in ver. 5, 6.[a]

[a] Both was already noted by Amyrald as remarkable and significant. The sig. of the number ten he rightly determines thus: "that nothing might be awanting to the perfect

Ver. 1–2.—Ver. 1. *Halleluiah. Praise the Lord in his sanctuary, praise him in his mighty stronghold.* Ver. 2. *Praise him on account of his mighty deeds, praise him according to his great glory.*—In ver. 1, several would understand by the *sanctuary* the heavenly one. But קדשׁ is never used of that; the reference to the earthly place of honouring cannot, for the sake of what follows, be dispensed with, and the connection of heaven with earth in the call to praise God, is found also in Ps. cxlviii., the subject of which is here again briefly resumed. *In his mighty*, comp. Ps. lxviii. 34, *stronghold*, where the hosts of heaven, the angels, and sun, moon, and stars, praise him.

Ver. 3–6.—Ver. 3. *Praise him with sound of trumpets, praise him with harp and psaltery.* Ver. 4. *Praise him with timbrel and dance, praise him with stringed instruments and pipes.* Ver. 5. *Praise him with loud cymbals, praise him with cymbals of jubilee.* Ver. 6. *Let every thing that has breath praise the Lord. Halleluiah.*—In ver. 4, the pipe, עוּגב, as a wind instrument, forms a contrast to the stringed instruments. There is no trace elsewhere to be found of the pipe being used in the public worship of God; and the only instruments in use for blowing upon were the trumpets, comp. Introd. to Ps. v. Beyond doubt, the pipe, which otherwise did not belong to the temple service, was brought into requisition here, only because the feast had at the same time the character of a popular rejoicing. In like manner also timbrels and dances. The timbrels were mentioned also in Ps. lxviii. 25, and in 2 Sam. vi. 5, where we find a similar enumeration of the musical instruments: "David and the whole house of Israel played there before the Lord." As here also, the extraordinary was brought into play, and it was, besides, difficult to make out the number ten, we may the rather expect, that the usual instruments would be reckoned up; and we thus, from our Psalm, arrive at the result, that the sacred music was extremely simple, and the readiness of many expositors to find in every dark word of the superscriptions a new musical instrument, is very ill applied.—In ver. 5, *cymbals of the hearing* are audible, high-sounding cymbals. As the first member marks the sound, so the second marks the joyful character of the tone. This was the pe-

celebration of God's glory:—the tenth number denotes, according to the use of scripture, complete fulness of anything."

culiar character of the cymbals, which were used only at festivals of a joyful kind, comp. 2 Sam, vi. 5, Ezra iii. 10, Neh. xii. 27. תרועה, jubilee, comp. Ps. xxvii. 6, lxxxix. 15, Numb. xxiii. 21. נשמה, breath, ver. 6, denotes very often that which has breath —here, in contrast to the dead instruments, comp. Gen. xiv. 21. At the sacred feasts there was not merely playing but also singing, comp. Ps. lxviii. 25, Neh. xii. As the life of the faithful, and the history of the church, so also the Psalter, with all its cries from the depths, runs out in a Hallelujah.

APPENDIX

TREATISES.

I. ON THE DESIGNATIONS, CONTENTS, AND DIVISIONS OF THE PSALMS.

THERE is no general name in Hebrew for the Psalms. This sufficiently appears from the circumstance, that where the whole should be designated, names are employed, which manifestly belong in strictness only to a part, and can be made to comprehend the whole only *a potiori*. Thus the name תְּפִלּוֹת prayer-songs, in the closing formula of the second book, at the end of Ps. lxxii. So also the name commonly found among the Jews in the Masoretic superscription to the Psalms, תְּהִלִּים, praise-songs, songs specially appropriated to the praise of God. It has, indeed, been remarked, with the view of representing the suitableness of the latter designation, that all the Psalms aim at the glorification of God. "All the Psalms (says F. L. Stolberg, Abh. über die Ps. in Bd. 2 der. Rel. G.) contain the praise of God; for even the deep abasement of the penitent sinner, who, with contrite heart and confiding love, flies up to the source of mercy, weeps his praise." Clauss (Beitr. p. 2) rests on 2 Chron. xxxi. 2, Neh. xii. 8, where the whole charge of the Levites in regard to singing is described as the giving of praise. But though it is certainly true, that an element of divine praise pervades the whole Psalms, as also that in them all there is, if not an express, at least a concealed, "Lord, have mercy on me"—though upon the existence of these elements the application of the two names to the entire collection proceeds, and would not otherwise have been generally followed; yet it is not the less to be maintained, that the designation תְּהִלּוֹת or תְּהִלִּים, as also that of תְּפִלּוֹת, is one merely *a potiori*. In regard to the latter this was already probable from analogy. And that the name תְּהִלָּה originally, and as distinguished

from תְּפִלָּה, the proper prayer-song, designates only such a composition as has the praise of God for its most prominent and striking character, is evident from the superscription of Ps. cxlv. But this character by no means belongs to all the Psalms. The passage, 2 Chron. v. 13., shews that the designation is given only *a potiori* even in those passages which are quoted by Clauss. But its application was the more natural, as it is a distinguishing peculiarity of later times to speak of prayer in the proper sense as a giving of praise to God, so that to praise God and laud him always was then represented as the chief function of the Levites.

There is, therefore, no designation in Hebrew, which comprehends the whole, like the Greek ψαλμὸς, which has been elevated by the LXX. to the honour of a general title—music on the string, and a song accompanied by such music—properly, indeed, only the first, ψάλλειν signifying only to play, not to sing, excepting in the LXX., and those who took their usage from it. Stringed music is the natural accompaniment of such poetry as proceeds from an immediate gush of feeling. It is only to be remarked concerning this designation, that it does not specifically distinguish the Psalms from worldly lyric poetry; for example, from such productions as David's lamentation over Saul and Jonathan. This defect, however, is of less moment, as we stand here on holy ground, and the primary object is only to distinguish the collection in question from the other sacred writings, in particular from those which have in common with it the poetical characteristic.

The name שִׁיר is partly too comprehensive, and partly also too narrow. Originally, it denotes the song in its widest compass, and is used of such songs as were sung without any musical accompaniment; comp. Is. v. 1; Canticles i. 1. So also is it found in the superscriptions of the Psalms in combinations, such as Schir Hammaaloth, pilgrim's song, and at Ps. xxx., xlv. But, on the other hand, where it is absolutely employed in the superscriptions (Ps. xlvi., xlviii., lxv., lxvi., lxvii., lxviii.., lxxv., lxxvi., lxxxiii., lxxxvii., lxxxviii., cviii.), and also in the text of the Psalms, it always denotes the joyful song of praise, which alone deserves, in the fullest sense, the name of song, as only in that does the breast expand itself, and the voice become elevated to the full pitch. Comp. on Ps. xlii. 8, cxxxvii. 3, and, in reference to the apparent exceptions in the superscriptions of Ps. lxxxiii., lxxxviii., see the Introd. to these Psalms. Indeed, שִׁיר when standing absolutely in the superscriptions, *cannot* have the signification of song in general. For, in that case, it would really have been meaningless, as every one could see at a glance, that there was here a song, and not a piece of

prose. Especially in a collection of the sacred songs of the nation would the exceptions be extremely rare. The name שיר, therefore, expresses, on the one side, what is common to the Psalms with every thing that is not prose, and, on the other, what belongs only to a particular class of Psalms.

The current view regards מזמור as the general name of the Psalms, exactly corresponding to ψαλμὸς, by which it is rendered in the LXX. So, still, with a slight modification, Ewald, poet. B. Th. i. p. 25. He considers נגינה, Ps. lxxvii. 6, as most thoroughly agreeing with ψαλμὸς. "But it is certain (he says) that מזמור indicates a melodious song, to be sung probably with an instrument, Gr. μελος, and as stringed instruments were the most common among the Hebrews, the rendering of the LXX. is accordingly justified."

But a series of objections immediately present themselves against this view. 1. If מזמור were itself equivalent to ψαλμός, it would not in the superscriptions be often coupled with בנגינות, Ps. iv., vi., lxvii., lxxvi. One of the two must, in that case, have been quite superfluous; and least of all should we look for anything superfluous in the concise style of the superscriptions. 2. Even where it occurs without such a combination, the מזמור would, in that view of it, be unnecessary and superfluous, especially where it occurs absolutely, as in Ps. lxvi., lxvii., xcii. It might fitly have been used as a designation of the whole, but not of the particular parts. It would be not less singular, than if in a church song-book, particular songs should bear the superscription of church-song. 3. "מזמור does not occur excepting in the superscriptions of certain Psalms. All the Psalms in the collection are not so designated, nor is the plural מזמרים used as a name for the whole" (Clauss). These facts scarcely admit of any explanation, if the word has the general import of Psalm. The first fact seems to indicate, that מזמור, just as מכתם and משכיל, itself bore a poetical character; which is also confirmed by the circumstance that זמר, so far as it refers to playing and singing, is only to be met with in poetry. But if the verb without any addition, signified to sing and play, and the noun, Psalm, no reason could be discovered for the merely poetical usage. The two latter facts manifest, that מזמור is not a general name for the Psalms, but designates the characteristic peculiarity of a part of the whole. 4. Clauss has already noticed the circumstance as significant, that מזמור never occurs with משכיל or מכתם in one superscription, as also these two other designations never appear in conjunction. The solitary exception in Ps. lxxxviii. is

only an apparent one. For there two superscriptions are connected together, a general one for Ps. lxxxviii. and lxxxix., and a special one for Ps. lxxxviii. This cannot be considered a mere accident. The only rational explanation is, that the three designations did not properly admit of being combined together, which might then, for example, have easily been the case, if מִזְמוֹר, as also מַשְׂכִּיל and מִכְתָּם, pointed to the worth and importance of the Psalms it is prefixed to, precisely as שִׁיר הַשִּׁירִים in the superscription of the Canticles. A twofold designation in this respect would scarcely have been proper. On the current view no reason can be given, why מִזְמוֹר might not as readily occur beside מַשְׂכִּיל and מִכְתָּם, as שִׁיר, which is commonly found in connection with it. 5. It admits of no satisfactory explanation by the current view, that זָמַר should be used alike of singing and playing. A sense of this difficulty, as appears, has led to a denial of the fact, as to its being so used. Thus Meier in his Wurtzelwörterbuch, p. 213, says: "Because the song, according to the rule, was accompanied with playing on stringed instruments, זָמַר sometimes occurs in the sense of singing with the accompaniment of an instrument, the latter being connected with בְּ. This, however, never means to play upon the harp, but is a pregnant expression, as often occurs in Hebrew, for singing accompanied with the harp, or as we say with like brevity, for the harp to be sung." But in disproof of this representation Ps. xcviii. 5 is alone sufficient, where בְּכִנּוֹר can only signify *with* the harp, not *for* it. It is also opposed by Ps. xxvii. 6, where זָמַר cannot mean to sing, because the singing, שִׁיר, goes before—comp. Ps. ci. 1, cviii. 2, civ. 33, cv. 2, where in like manner זָמַר is united with שִׁיר. Against this view is also זִמְרַת נְבָלֶיךָ in Am. v. 23, זִמְרָא used of music in Dan. iii. 5, and the Arabic, where the word possesses, besides the signification of singing, not merely that of playing, but that also of dancing. 6. Finally, the common construction of זָמַר with the accusative—the Lord, or the name of the Lord, his strength, or his glory—cannot but appear striking.

Having thus, by the way, brought into suspicion the view currently entertained regarding זָמַר and מִזְמוֹר, if we examine more closely, we shall find, that it rests upon no solid foundation. זָמַר has originally the meaning, to dress, decorate, adorn, and in this sense alone does it occur in the oldest records, the Pentateuch. The verb itself is used of the dressing of a vineyard in Lev. xxv. 3, 4. The undressed vineyard is, in ver. 5, called נָזִיר, incomtus. The noun זָמֶר occurs in Deut. xiv. 5, as the name of a beast of the deer species, whose beauty and loveliness of form particularly attracted the notice of the orientals, comp.

Prov. v. 19, Gen. xlix. 21 (Gesen. s. v. יעל "it is customary with the orientals to compare graceful females to animals of the deer species, especially to the doe")—properly, ornament, decoration, for the ornamented, decorated. In the same category is found also the name צבי, 1. splendor, decus; 2. caprea, dorcas, a formae pulchritudine dicta, Gesen.: then the name איל, the stag, the powerful. יעל, the wild goat, signifies properly the excellent. We also may compare the word זמרי, the elegant. In Gen. xliii. 11, occurs זמרת הארץ, the ornament of the land, for the best productions of it—commonly with a far-fetched derivation, cantio terrae, for fructus celebratissimus. And also the זמרת in Ex. xv. 2, comp. Isa. xii. 2, Ps. cxviii. 14, is better explained by ornament = תפארת, than by song: my strength and ornament is the Lord.

In later times, זמר still occurs in the same signification. It is used of the dressing of the vineyard in Isa. v. 6. In Isa. ii. 4, מַזְמֵרוֹת denotes the pruning-knives by which the vineyards are cut; מְזַמְּרוֹת, usually rendered snuffers, from their accompaniments in 1 Kings vii. 50, 2 Kings xii. 14, 2 Chron. iv. 22, but rather instruments that served for dressing and cleaning. It occurs in Jer. lii. 18, along with יעים, for the shovels that removed the ashes. Beyond doubt it means "the pans for the removing of the ashes," in Ex. xxvii. 3, there, precisely as in Jer., coupled with יעים, comp. xxxviii. 3. Then the זמרת in Isa. xii. 2, Ps. cxviii. 14. The proper name Simri.

Now, in the song of Deborah, in Judg. v. 3, the verb, in its current signification, was transferred to song and music, זמר ליהוה, adorn to the Lord, namely, in song and music, for: sing and play to him with grace, comp. היטיב נגן in Ps. xxxiii. 3, 1 Sam. xvi. 17.

From the song of Deborah, which we may gather also from other indications to have been highly esteemed by David, comp. on Ps. lxviii., he borrowed the use of the verb in the same sense, comp. on Ps. ci. 1, which was by him formally incorporated with the Psalmodic poetry. The emphatic expression accorded peculiarly with his lively spirit, which could not endure to stand at the common measure of singing and playing. By him also, doubtless, was the noun מזמור formed, which is found only with him and those who copied after him.

They said, to adorn the Lord, the song and the harp, and also to adorn to the Lord, or to the name of the Lord, his strength, or his honour, for: to give praise to him or it in graceful speech, and with well-executed music, comp. Ps. xxx. 12, vii. 17, xxi. 13, lxvi. 2.

מזמור, in so far as it denotes graceful song, song that displayed

much art and skill, was well fitted to serve as a distinctive appellation for the productions of lyric poetry. For this, as the poetry of feeling and inspiration, soars farther above the prose of common life, and seeks also for the most part in the language it employs, the rare, the dark, the elevated, as will readily be found on a comparison of the prophetic style with that of the Psalms. Yet מזמור does not occur as such a distinctive appellation, excepting, perhaps, to some extent in the superscription of Ps. lxviii. It always rather denotes the artificial character of the Psalms, in the superscription of which it stands, in opposition to a class of lyric poems, in which the composition assumes a more negligent and humbler form. But the designation, as well as מכתם and משכיל, is to be understood positively and not exclusively, as appears even from this consideration, that מזמור is never used along with either of these other terms, because a double designation of worth, even though given from a different point of view, would have appeared unsuitable. Still there are Psalms to which, from their simple and artless character, it could not be prefixed, such as Ps. xxv., xxxiv., xxxvii., and those generally in which David lets himself down to persons of lower capacities, and accommodates himself to the higher demands of popularity.

We turn now to a consideration of the contents of the Psalms. That the collection contains productions of Israelitish lyrics, and that we find ourselves here throughout on the territory of feeling, is clear as day. But this, after all, is not to say much. We require a still narrower limitation. 1. A hasty glance over the collection itself, a superficial examination of the whole of the writings to which it belongs, shews that we have not here a collection of all the productions of Israelitish lyric poetry, that it presents us only with such lyrics as belong to the strictly religious territory. The Song of David on the death of Saul and Jonathan, preserved in 2 Sam. i., does not lie within this territory, and hence is not of this collection. 2. All the Psalms are *songs of Israel*, as David describes his Psalms in 2 Sam. xxiii. 1. This implies the whole religious community to have been respected in them. They all not only bore a religious character, but were also appointed to be used in the services of the sanctuary, for which nothing can be proper, but what the individual sings as the organ of the church. The individual comes here into account only in so far as he presents a general aspect. One alone must come out more prominently, "the man, he who was raised on high, the anointed of the God of Jacob," David—in whom the community was represented as in its head, and even in his case the general must always discover itself behind the particular. The last words of

David, in 2 Sam. xxiii., however, were excluded from the Psalms, not because they were too personal, but because they bore a prophetical and not lyrical character, as is plainly indicated by the prophetical introduction. If we travel through the whole Psalms, we shall find that the personal occurs in them only in reference to David. Where this meets us in Psalms not of David's composition, still the person is not to be regarded as that of the writer, which always retires modestly into the background, but that of David. So in Ps. xlii., xliii., lxxxiv., which were sung by David's bards as from *his* soul. The Psalm of Hezekiah, in Isa. xxxviii., from its personal character, could not be admitted to a place in the number of the Psalms; and, in like manner, Jonah's song of thanksgiving. 3. The collection contains only such songs as the church was convinced had been composed under the special co-operation of the Spirit of God. That this, even in the remotest times, was held to be a necessary condition of such art as was employed in the service of the sanctuary, appears from Ex. xxxi. 2, 3. Even the founders of sacred music are regarded by the author of Chronicles, who wrote at the time the Psalms were collected, and probably had some hand in the collecting of them, not as mere ordinary musicians; they are, in his view, beings full of God, seers—comp. 1 Chron. xxv. 1, where they are called "the prophets" of the sacred music, and ver. 5, where Heman is named "the king's seer in the words of God." How much more, then, the sacred bards themselves! David describes himself, in 2 Sam. xxiii. 1, 2, as one who spoke under the impulse of the Spirit of God. That he disclosed a higher than human wisdom, is intimated by the Psalmist himself in the beginning of Ps. xlix. Asaph, the composer of Psalms, is called a seer in 2 Chron. xxix. 30. That David spake in the Spirit, was a principle alike held by our Lord and by the Pharisees, Matth. xxii. 41-46. The use which our Lord makes of the Psalms after the resurrection, Luke xxiv. 44, rests on the supposition, that they, as well as the Books of Moses, and the writings of the prophets, were composed under divine direction. Only on the national conviction of this can the admission of the Book of Psalms into the canon have proceeded. For the divine co-operation was, with the collectors, the distinguishing mark of a canonical book—see Hävernick, Einl. i. § 10.

The bearing of the Psalms may be gathered from this view of their contents. They present no new doctrine. In this respect they rest upon the Pentateuch. The instruments used by God for the development of doctrine, were not the Psalmists, but the Prophets. Only with one of the writers of the Psalms, David, does the prophetical play into the lyrical, and in his productions we meet with new representations concerning Messiah and his kingdom, which served to the prophets them-

selves as the kernel of new developments. It is still, however, to be borne in mind, respecting these portions of the Psalms, that David owed the groundwork of them to the prophets. His Messianic Psalms throughout rest on 2 Sam. vii., and, if this had not been the case, would have belonged to another region than that of Psalmodic poetry. The peculiar value of the Psalms turns on this, that they give us an insight into the heart of the Old Testament saints—that they disclose their feelings to us in the most sacred and hallowed moments of their life—that they open for us a deep insight into the more hidden wonders of the true religion. It is certainly not to be overlooked that in one respect the songs of Christian poets have a great advantage over Psalmodic poetry. In the knowledge of the redemption brought in by Christ, in the facts of his life, sufferings, and death, they possess much richer materials. Accordingly, the practice of the older Reformed churches of confining sacred music to the singing only of the Psalms, sprung from the misapprehension of a Scriptural principle, and was itself a mistake. But never can the Psalms be supplanted by "the new song" which the Christian church has sung and should still sing. Their peculiar distinction is the buoyancy and freshness of feeling, which here first had its tongue in a manner loosed, and also the very quality which places them at a disadvantage, their simplicity; for there exists a profound necessity for the religious spirit falling back from time to time on the simplest principles of religion. There is also something very consolatory and elevating in the thought that what brings us down and lifts us up again, has powerfully affected the souls of God's people centuries before. We are wonderfully moved when we accompany the sacred bards from Moses to Nehemiah and everywhere discover ourselves and our God. Finally, the Psalms have in this a high distinction above our church songs, that they form a part of the word of God. But this we can only indicate here, not enlarge upon.

In regard to the *division* of the Psalms, the difficulties of a complete and proper classification are much greater here than in respect to Christian songs. In the latter, the division must always be formed primarily upon the succession of facts in the life of Christ and the festivals therewith connected. Other kinds stand plainly distinct from these, in that they exhibit the peculiar doctrines of the gospel, and represent the life of believers under the New Testament as rising to its full development. Still one must not despair, as some do, of making out any division of the Psalms, the less so, as the principles of a very simple one, and such as is alone suited to the nature of the case, to the embryo character of the Old Testament, are obvious enough in the Psalms themselves. The

collection falls into three great divisions. 1. Such Psalms as proceeded from a spirit chiefly moved and actuated by joy, shewing itself in lively admiration of God, or gratitude for his astonishing goodness in bestowing gifts on the people generally, or on individuals, declaring the sense inwardly cherished of his love, or celebrating in glowing terms the majesty, glory, and grace of God. The most descriptive name for this class is תְּהִלָּה in the superscription of Ps. cxlv. Other designations are לְתוֹדָה, for ascription of praise in Ps. c., and שִׁיר in the superscriptions of an entire series of Psalms. In some Psalms the place of such an expressive designation is transferred from the superscription to the beginning of the Psalm itself. Thus: שִׁירוּ לַיהוָה, sing praise to the Lord, in Ps. xcvi; בָּרְכִי נַפְשִׁי אֶת יְהוָה, bless my soul the Lord, in Ps. ciii., in contrast to the תְּפִלָּה the prayer-song in Ps. cii.; הוֹדוּ לַיהוָה praise the Lord, in Ps. cv., and often besides. As a substitute, also, for an express designation is the halleluiah in a number of Psalms written during the period of the exile and subsequently. 2. Another great division consists of such Psalms as proceeded from a depressed and mournful frame of mind, variations of the "Lord have mercy on us," which alternates with the halleluiah in the lives of the saints. The technical designation of Psalms of this class is תְּפִלָּה, prayer-song; see on its sig. at Ps. xc., cii. Besides this there are also the designations לְזִכָּרוֹן, for bringing to remembrance, *i. e.* putting God in mind of his people's necessities, Ps. xxxviii., lxx.; לְעַנּוֹת, touching the temptation, Ps. lxxxviii.; אַל תַּשְׁחֵת, destroy not, as an address to God, in Ps. lvii.-lix., and Ps. lxxv. 3. Psalms which proceeded from a more quiet reflective state of mind, religious-moral, or didactic Psalms; for example, Ps. i., xv., xxiv., xxxii., xlix., l., lxxiii. The term מַשְׂכִּיל, instruction, which is found at the head of thirteen Psalms, is a suitable designation for all of this class. The prefixing of this term, however, is no proof of the Psalm being apportioned to this class to the exclusion of the two others, nor does the want of it indicate that the Psalm is not of this class. It was chiefly prefixed to such Psalms as had the instructive design more concealed, so that it might easily have been overlooked. The Psalms of this class belong for the most part to the time of David. In the later periods, when the struggle was for the existence or non-existence of the people of God, the Psalmodic poetry almost entirely spoke the language of lamentation, hope, and thanksgiving. What engrosses the whole heart, that always resounds in a nation's songs—as with us the songs which were composed during the thirty years' war are chiefly songs of trial and conflict—and, as even now, in times of deep depression, persons would naturally give vent to their soul in songs of

this description, when looking forward to and sighing for times of refreshing. It is also worthy of remark, that the necessity which at the first was met by Psalms of a didactic nature was latterly in great measure removed by the didactic poetry of the Proverbs which flourished in the age of Solomon, and afterwards by the prophets. The didactic poetry of the Psalms is distinguished from the latter not only by the form but also by the hearty character of the tone, the descending of the teacher into the soul of the taught—comp., for example, Ps. xlix. 5, "Wherefore should I fear in the days of evil, when the iniquity of my supplanters compasses me about?" instead of the prophetic *Thou*. The prophet speaks as the representative of God, the Psalmist as the better self of the person to be instructed; or where this is not the case, as a paternal friend. The didactic poetry of the Psalms is again distinguished from that of the Proverbs by the overflow of feeling, the gushing forth of a moved heart, as opposed to the repose, the objective and reflective character of the wise sayings, in which the poetical was connected with no internal necessity, but was only a suitable form, and hence was not accompanied by song and music.

II. ON THE HISTORY OF THE PSALMODIC POETRY.

The source of a popular lyrical poetry flowed so richly even in the age of Moses, that an entire collection of such songs then sprung into existence called the Book of the Wars of the Lord, Numb. xxi. 14, 17, 18, 27, &c. They re-echoed the impression which the Lord's dealings with his people were fitted to produce, but in a manner as different from the Psalms as the songs of Körner differ from church songs; see my Beitr. iii. p. 223, ss.

A second collection of this sort is that cited in Jos. x. 13, and 2 Sam. i. 18, "The Book of Jasher" (the upright.) We might conceive this collection to have been identical with the Book of the Wars of the Lord, which may not have been closed in the time of Moses, but continued the national song-book for later generations. Nor would the diversity of the title of itself prove the reverse; comp. upon the various forms of citing the same book, Keil comm. on B. of Chron., p. 24. But it is against the supposition now made, that the Book of the Wars of the Lord contained songs in celebration of the wonders wrought by the Lord for his people, while the book of the upright, from its title, and

the two examples given of its productions, contained songs in praise of distinguished servants of the Lord. This second collection was certainly indebted to the time of the Judges for much of its matter. The last mention made of it is in the age of David. It appears, that in this age, the popular lyrical poetry suffered a check in consequence of the mighty elevation which the poetical talent then received from being turned into a spiritual direction; although David himself, as his song on Saul and Jonathan shews, took an active part in the former. This kind of song was still farther removed from the Psalms, than the songs of the Book of the Wars of the Lord. It had no religious colouring, but bore an entirely worldly character. It was distinguished from similar poetry in profane literature only by its more refined tone of feeling. An accompaniment to it is found in the specimen given of a popular song in 1 Sam. xviii. 7, where undoubtedly we have only the kind of catch words which formed the burden of the song. It would seem that such a power had been wielded by David over the minds of the people by his spiritual songs, that the mere worldly song afterwards sunk into the lowest region, occupied by the drunkards, comp. Isa. v. 12, Amos vi. 5, or at most served only for a harmless private gratification, comp. Ps. lxv. 13, Job xxi. 12, without having any thing like a national standing. Solomon's attempt also to introduce the poetry of the world among the Israelities—comp. 1 Kings iv. 32, "And his songs were a thousand and five," and v. 13, "And he spake (probably still in his proverbs and songs) of trees, from the cedar tree that is in Lebanon, even unto the hyssop, that springeth out of the wall; and he spake of beasts and of fowl, and of creeping things, and of fishes"—was for the same reason productive of little result.

Spiritual and especially devotional poetry had its origin among the Israelites. It is of itself incredible, that a people whose soul was formed by religion, whose whole existence had grown up in such close union with faith in their God, if they had poetry at all, should have abstained from employing it in the service of God. Among the Egyptains, whose customs the Israelites followed, music had obtained predominantly a religious use (Rossellini Mon. ii. 3. p. 78, Wilkinson Manners and Customs of Egypt. ii., p. 316.) At the feast also of the golden calf there was singing of music, Ex. xxxii. 18. The high place, which was attained by poetry in the divine service under David, can scarcely be accounted for without an earlier foundation of some sort having been laid. It seems to be implied in 1 Chron. xv. 16, that David found a faculty of song and music already in existence among the Levites. But we have several remnants of sacred lyric poetry, and in particular of that which was adapted for divine worship, from the times

before David. Moses' Song, indeed, and his blessing on the tribes of Israel, are not of the sort now under consideration; for these possess not a lyrical but a prophetical character. The priestly benediction, however, in Numb. vi. 22-26, deserves a place here, for it is re-echoed in various ways in the Psalms. So also the words which Moses, according to Numb. x. 35, 36, uttered when the ark of the covenant began to move and again rested; but more particularly the song of the children of Israel after the passage through the Red Sea, Ex. xv., though it was too closely connected with the occasion that gave rise to it, to be permanently used in the divine service, and so has its proper place in the history, and not in the national song-book. Next to these, we have Deborah's Song in Judge v., to which the last remark also applies; but its near relation to the Psalms is evident alone from the fact, that David has almost literally adopted some of its passages. Then, finally, the Song of Hannah in 1 Sam. ii. contains a proof of the early cultivation of religious poetry, and in particular of such as was adapted for public worship. This moves far more nearly along the beaten path than either the song at the Red Sea, or the Song of Deborah. It further contains much, that though originally referring to the national relations, is here transferred to the personal—passages, which have given occasion to modern criticism, in opposition to the veritable character of the books of Samuel, entirely to reject the Song of Hannah. Every thing that at first sight wears a strange aspect, admits of an easy explanation, if we conceive the Song of Hannah to have been an echo of the songs to which she had just been listening in the tabernacle.

Yet still the whole period that preceded David furnishes no materials for the collection of Psalms, excepting the one composed by Moses, Ps. xc. Though devotional poetry existed in the time of the Judges, it bore a sporadic character. What is said in 1 Sam. iii. 1 in reference to prophecy, "And the Word of God was precious in those days, prophecy was not spread abroad," might be said also of it. And its comparatively not very numerous productions still failed to rise to the full height of the Israelitish sacred song, so that latterly, when this height was reached, they fell into neglect, much as the church songs of the evangelical church almost entirely banished the productions of the preceding centuries. But that they contributed their share to the accomplishment of this end, we cannot doubt, from the relation in which we find David standing both to the Song of Deborah and to that of Hannah.

The proper efflorescence of the Psalmodic poetry was dependent on a threefold condition. The first grand pre-requisite lay in *a national religious awakening*. Then this kind of poetry, precisely as the church

song with us, had a thoroughly *public* character; * the Psalmist appeared as the interpreter of the sentiments of the community. When these were cold, dead, and indifferent, the individual, however highly gifted, could perform nothing rightly. But if the community had first become alive, then it was of importance for it farther that its Lord should raise up for it a man, who, being endowed with *an especial measure of his Spirit*, and along therewith *a creative poetical genius*, might give noblest utterance to the emotions of the community; so that, what in one respect was only a representation of what already existed, might in another serve as the means of preserving and quickening the religious spirit.

Now, the foundation for the prosperity of the Psalmodic poetry was laid by Samuel, in the religious revival that was brought about by him. Of great service in this respect were the schools of the prophets, which were instituted by him. How they became the floor and the centre of the spiritual life for Israel, appears from 1 Sam. x. 5 ss., where Samuel sends Saul to the sons of the prophets, that his cold heart might be kindled by the flame of their inspiration. The overpowering influence these exercised is manifest from what is related to have taken place here and in 1 Sam. xix. 20, etc. But these institutions stood apparently in a still closer connection with the flourishing of the sacred lyrics. That the prophecyings in them were very nearly allied to the sacred lyrics,—as of such an intercommunion between the two we have an older example in the predictions of Balaam, and a later in the songs of thanksgiving, which Isaiah has interwoven with his prophecies—discovers itself in the circumstance, that they prophesied with harps, pipes, and stringed instruments, which was not at all customary with the prophets. It is a proof also of their partly lyrical character, that those who went within the magical circle, themselves began to prophecy. This could scarcely have been the case, if their effusions had been regular prophecies.

The two other conditions were realized by the raising up of David. The connection which he held with the schools of the prophets, is manifest from 1 Sam. xix. 19 ss. There can be no doubt, that he owed to his intercourse with Samuel, and his schools of the prophets, if not the

* We may say of the Psalms what Bodé (Gesch. der. Hellen. Dichkunst 2 s. 8), has said of the Doric Lyrical poetry: "One of its characteristic traits was its predominantly public character and its relation to the State. The stream of Doric national lyrics could, therefore, be as little directed upon individual acting or individual emotions, as it could enjoy itself in the representation of merely personal relations, tendencies, or passions. The matter of these lyrics had been of such a kind, as that, while it was derived from particular circumstances or events, it still admitted of these being treated in so general a way as to awaken the interest of the entire community, and especially stood in a close relation to the religious notions of the Dorians."

first awakening, at least the further development of his religious life. It is not to be understood from 1 Sam. xvi. 6 ss., that Samuel was still unacquainted with David, when he came to anoint him. He probably had before this the human conviction, that he was the man after God's own heart. But he leaves that here entirely out of view, in order more emphatically to convey the impression, that it was not that which decided the matter, but the express and authoritative command of God. How David became endowed with the Spirit of God, and thus received his higher consecration to be the singer of the songs of Israel, without which no poetical gift could have been of any moment, is related in 1 Sam. xvi. 13: "And Samuel took the horn of oil, and anointed him in the midst of his brethren: and the Spirit of the Lord came upon David from that day forward;" comp. v. 14: "And the Spirit of the Lord departed from Saul, and an evil spirit from the Lord troubled him;" from which it is clear, that the Spirit of the Lord is not, with several, to be regarded as the kind of principle of the kingly gifts. David was already in the possession of this spirit when he was called to Saul, and the power to counteract the operation of the evil spirit in Saul without doubt proceeded from the good spirit that dwelt in him. As a pious singer, he is expressly recommended to Saul in v. 18, a passage which shows, that he did not employ himself about common music. But it was the cross which first brought David's gift into full development; his first Psalms were composed during the time of the persecution from Saul; and the old saying, "Where would have been David's Psalms, if he had not been persecuted?" has its foundation in truth. A second great stage was David's ascension to the throne, and the care which thence devolved upon him respecting the sanctuary, to have the courts of which at all times filled with the voice of prayer and praise, he took for one of the great objects of his life.

That the Psalmodic poetry should at once have struck its roots so deeply among the people, in the times of David, was owing partly to the distinguished gifts and the high position of the father of this poetry, and lastly to the important place which he from the first assigned it in the service of God. David instituted for the public performance of the Psalms a sacred chorus of singers, at the head of which he stood himself, comp. 1 Chron. xxv. 2, 5, 6; then followed the three masters of song, Asaph, Heman, and Jeduthun; then their twenty-four sons, namely, four sons of Asaph, six of Jeduthun, fourteen of Heman. Each of these sons had a class of twelve singers under him, composed of their relatives. But while these are to be regarded as the proper artists, v. 7, distinguished again among themselves as to relative perfection and right of precedence, v. 8, they still formed only the kernel and

the élite of the sacred musicians. Of the 38,000 Levites, not fewer than 4000 were set apart by David for this department of service. Asaph, with his company of singers, was stationed with the ark of the covenant on Mount Zion, with the introduction of which the whole of the arrangements took their beginning, Heman and Jeduthun with the holy tent at Gibeon, comp. 1 Chron. xvi. 37 ss.

It appears from 1 Chron. xvi., xxv., that the most accomplished persons, in this department of service, were those who were alike skilled in song and music; but that this was not universally the case, is clear from Ps. lxviii. 25, where the singers and players on instruments are distinguished. For instruments, with the accompaniment of which the Psalms were sung, the Psalms themselves name only the harp and the cithara, as those which were to be constantly and regularly used, comp. xxxiii. 2, xlix. 4, lxxi. 22, xcii. 3, cxliv. 9. In Ps. lvii. 8, harp and psalter are used as a sort of compound noun, because the two together give the idea of music. Other instruments are mentioned only in festival and national songs of praise, as trumpets, at the thanksgiving for Jehosaphat's victory, Ps. xlvii. 5, at the paschal feast in Ps. lxxxi. 3, at the consecration of the city walls, under Nehemiah, in Ps. cl. That the cymbals did not constitute a general component part of the sacred music, but only a necessary requisite of a feast of joy, appears from Ps. cl. 5, "Praise him with loud cymbals, praise him with high-sounding cymbals." The high-sounding or jubilee-tone is here marked as characteristic of the cymbals. Hence, they could only be used on joyful occasions, in connection with the instruments of a cheerful kind, as the schalmei in Ps. cl.—That the stringed instruments formed the fundamental ingredient of the sacred music, and that the others were only accompaniments added in certain circumstances, is also evident from the בנגינות in the superscriptions, Ps. iv., vi., liv., lv., lxvii., lxxvi., comp. lxi.—The intimations in the historical books further tend to conduct us to the same result. In 1 Chron. xiii. 8, it is said, in reference to the bringing in of the ark of the covenant, which bore the character of a cheerful public festival, "And David and all Israel played before God with all their might, with songs, and with psalteries, and harps, and with tymbrels, cymbals, and trumpets." Psalteries and harps are here mentioned as the general, then follow as the particular the instruments of a loud, shrill, joyful sound; comp. 1 Chron. xv. 16, 19, 28. The cymbals, with the exception of 1 Chron. xvi. 5, 42, xxv. 1, 6, 2 Chron. xxix. 25, where the discourse is of the sacred music in general, without every thing there mentioned being understood to be employed in each particular case, are always named in connection only with joyful feasts, such as the introduction of the ark of the covenant, 2 Sam. vi. 5, the conse-

cration of the temple under Solomon, 2 Chron. v. 12, 13, the laying of the foundation of the new temple in Ezra iii. 10. The "instruments of the song of the Lord" are in 1 Chron. xvi. 42 distinguished from the cymbals. The trumpets were used at the bringing in of the ark, 1 Chron. xv. 24, "And the priests trumpeted with trumpets before the ark of the Lord,"—at the consecration of the temple, 2 Chron. v. 12, 13,—at the solemn restoration of the worship under Hezekiah, 2 Chron. xxix. 26, 27; finally, in Ezra iii. 10, Neh. xii. 35. They occur once besides as an essential part of the sacred music generally, 1 Chron. xvi. 6. They are always mentioned in connection with other noisy instruments. In 2 Chron. xxx. 21, it is said of the passover under Hezekiah, that they "praised the Lord with instruments of strength, which were to Jehovah;" Mich. "musical instruments being employed of such a kind as gave forth a louder sound;" R. Salomo "with trumpets"—comp. xxix. 26, 27. Hence the loud and hoarse sound was the characteristic. That the trumpets were always blown by the priests (comp. for example Ezra iii. 10), had its ground in Numb. x. 8, where the blowing of the trumpets was committed to the priests. The use in the sacred music entirely agrees with ver. 10, "And in the day of your gladness, and in your solemn days, and in your new moons, ye shall blow with the trumpets."

What has now been said regarding the use of trumpets in the sacred music, plainly disproves the hypothesis of Sommer upon the Selah, Bibl. Abh. Bd. 1, according to which it must indicate the places at which the trumpets were to be sounded. It proceeds on the supposition, which we have shewn to be erroneous, that the trumpets regularly accompanied the sacred song. The hypothesis is besides quite destitute of a historical and grammatical foundation; it has against it the Higgaion connected with Selah in Ps. ix. 16, and also a great number of passages where the use of the trumpets would be unsuitable, for example, Ps. lii. 3, xxiv. 6, lv. 7.

David's great interest in the establishment of the sacred music is manifest from this, that by him, or at least under his auspices, alterations were made in the musical instruments, perhaps the harp of ten strings introduced, comp. on Ps. xxxiii. 2, cxliv. 9. This is clearly established, especially from Am. vi. 5, where the luxurious in Samaria are characterized as those "who trifle to the sound of the harp, like David invent to themselves instruments of song." With this are to be connected 1 Chron. xxiii. 5, "upon the instruments which I made to praise," and 2 Chron. vii. 6, Neh. xii. 36, where the discourse is of musical instruments of David, and if they do not assert the Davidic origin of the particular instruments, they must be understood to speak

of the entire arrangement of the public devotional music by David—comp. ver. 24, Ezra iii. 10, 2 Chron. xxix. 25, 26,—which, according to these last passages, was formed under special direction from above, and the co-operation of the prophets Gad and Nathan.

To David himself belong 80 Psalms, to his companions, including Solomon's, 14, (Asaph 5, the sons of Korah 7, Solomon 2.) Of the remaining 55, there was composed in the time of Jehosaphat (xlvii. xlviii. lxxxiii.), four in the time of the Assyrian catastrophe (xlvi. lxxv. lxxvi. lxxxvii.), one at the carrying away of the ten tribes (lxxxi.), one unknown (lxxxv.), all the rest, altogether 46, in the time immediately before, during, and after the Babylonish captivity, namely, five Psalms of Asaph, and the sons of Korah (Ps. lxxvii. lxxiv., lxxix., lxxxviii., lxxxix.), then Ps. xci-cl., with the exception of nineteen belonging to David and Solomon.

It may seem strange at first sight that the long space between David and the Captivity, furnished so few additions. But on closer investigation it will be found that this could not be otherwise. We have already remarked that the foundation of the Psalmodic poetry was the religious awakening of the people, binding them into one whole. But this began to disappear even in the time of Solomon; inclination to idolatry, internal divisions, indifference rose more and more to the ascendant. The Chaldaic catastrophe was what first brought a decided change to the better. The worship of idols was overthrown, and the whole nation returned as one man to the service of God. During the interval, indeed, there did occur religious revivals under Jehosaphat, under Hezekiah, and under Josiah; these are also fully represented in the Psalter, and to the latter in particular belonged Ps. lxxvii. xci.-c., comp. on Ps. xciv. But they were only of short continuance, and on this account they could not tell very largely on the Psalter. Viewed in the general it was the purpose of the middle age to build itself up on that which had been produced during the great past under David, comp. 2 Chron. xxix. 30.

In the period after the Captivity the Psalmodic poetry does not go far down. It ceases after the last great occasion of singing a new song to the Lord, the completion of the city walls under Nehemiah. From that time matters fell much again into a beaten track, the movement of souls vanished, men came more and more to look back upon that which the spirit of God had spoken and sung by his instruments, in those times when the breath of inspiration pervaded the whole people. In the place of God's living organs there was now substituted the learning of Scripture. The Psalter-productions, as well as the word of prophecy, had run their course, which the later Psalms indeed plainly indicate; so that nothing farther might be expected in that depart-

ment, unless some new historical events of great moment should develop themselves.

Many writers have supposed, that there was a fresh revival of the Psalmodic poetry, in the time of the Maccabees. But this supposition not only has against it the history of the canon, but it is also disproved by an investigation into the particular Psalms, which can never, even with probability, be referred to the Maccabean period, and by a consideration of the construction of the Psalter, which does not admit of our descending below the time of Nehemiah. Besides, while the Maccabees were good soldiers, and zealous for the law of their fathers, they were not men full of the Holy Spirit; not one example of this sort meets us throughout the whole period. But that the co-operation of the Spirit of God was considered as a necessary mark of a song, we have already seen. How deeply they were themselves conscious of the absence of this Spirit, appears from 1 Macc. iv. 46, xiv. 41, ix. 27. Elsewhere the Psalmody goes always hand in hand with the prophecies. But prophecy is expressly renounced in the passages referred to in the Maccabees. It is also not to be overlooked, that the Maccabean period was not merely a time of external conflict, but one also of internal discord. Finally, the First Book of the Maccabees is so full in the communication of the speeches and prayers of its heroes, that it would be strange if it never so much as gave a hint of the new-made Psalms, especially as so many occasions for the purpose presented themselves. But there is never more than a general mention made of the songs, with which, at their thanksgiving solemnities, they praised God; comp. 1 Mac. iv. 30, 54, also iv. 24: "And they sang and extolled the Lord, for he is good, for his mercy endureth for ever." But there is good ground for believing, that the cxxxvi. Ps., there quoted, belonged to the beginning of the new colony, so that the citation serves as a proof, that people were then accustomed to give utterance to their new feelings in the old consecrated words. At the lamentation for Judas, the people availed themselves of the words of David on the death of Jonathan, 1 Mac. ix. 21, comp. 2 Sam. i. 19.

III.—THE AUTHORS OF THE PSALMS.

1. Moses is named as the author of Ps xc.

2. David is the author of 80 Psalms, Ps. i.–xli., Ps. li.-lxxi., Ps. ci.-ii., Ps. cviii.-x., cxxii., cxxiv., cxxxi., cxxxiii., Ps. cxxxviii.-xlv. The

variety of circumstances, situations, and modes, is first of all peculiar in these Psalms of David. The other composers of Psalms only divide among themselves his riches. He embraces the whole territory of sacred lyrics, of which he was enabled from his rich poetical gift, the varied events of his life, and the relations of his time, to take a full survey, and did not need to confine himself to any particular department. There is also peculiar to David, a singular depth and liveliness of feeling, which manifests itself, as well in the utterance of pain, the cry out of the depths, in which cold temperaments find themselves so little at home, as in mirth on account of redemption, and more especially in the rapid transition from the one to the other. David has, beyond doubt, given the tone to the method so frequently adopted in the Psalms, of suddenly and immediately interposing a word of divine consolation. It is a consequence of the very profound and lively nature of his feelings, that David rises to greater elevation than all the other writers of Psalms, comp. Ps. xviii., xxix., lxviii., cx., cxxxix.; whence arises the greater difficulty of the Psalms that proceeded from his pen, and a predilection for rare forms and words. Yet, on the other hand, David had also a very peculiar faculty in adapting himself to the simple. It is also a consequence of the depth and freshness of feeling, that, as the consideration of the doctrinal matter of the Psalms will shew, the Psalms of David are precisely those in which the greatest amount of instruction is contained. They are farther peculiarly distinguished by the union of child-like humility, such as reminds one of the unassuming shepherd youth, for example, Ps. xxiii., cxxxi., with a heroic faith, the spirit of fortitude, which, in its God, could spring over walls, and was not afraid of myriads of people that lay encamped round about him—in which we again recognise the man of war, the hero David, the deforcer of the lion, and the conqueror of Goliah; comp., for example, Ps. iii., xviii., xxxv., lx., lxviii. Peculiar, also, is the strength of consciousness regarding the retributive righteousness of God, which had established itself during the period of the Saulinе persecution, when David found, in this more especially, a shield against despair. Peculiar yet again, that, amid the straits of life, the oppression through Godless enemies comes out so strongly, with whom David had to maintain so very hard a struggle. Then, a peculiar element was introduced into the Psalmodic poetry of David, by the promise of 2 Sam. vii. Upon the ground of this promise, David runs out through an entire series of Psalms, in particular, the cycle Ps. cxxxviii.-xlv., into the future of his race, and accompanies it along its course of suffering, even to its final glorious issue. In regard to form, David was the first to introduce the alphabetical arrangement—an arrangement which was farther extended, in accordance with the import of numbers

to the grouping of verses, and the use of the names of God. To him also belongs the formation of the pairs of Psalms, and the larger Psalm cycles. The distinguishing character of the Psalmodic poetry of David would have discovered itself still more strongly, if there had stood beside him other independent bards; if he had not been so decidedly the prototype of all others in this territory, so that, in a certain sense, David may be considered the author of all the Psalms.

3. The name of Asaph is connected with altogether twelve Psalms. Of these five, Ps. l., lxxiii., lxxviii., lxxxi., lxxxii., belong to David's chief musician, see on Ps. l. The didactic-prophetical character is common to all these Psalms, see Introd. to Ps. lxxxi. The other seven belong to later times, and proceeded from the family of singers, which had Asaph for its founder,—on which see the Introd. to Ps. lxxiv. Delitzsch, in the Symbolis ad Ps. p. 80, has advanced the hypothesis, that these Psalms bear the designation לְאָסָף, not because they were composed by members of the Asaph family, for then it would have been לִבְנֵי אָסָף, comp. 2 Chron. xx. 14, xxix. 13, Ezra ii. 41, but because the Psalms of Asaph have served as a pattern to them. But the לְ before a name in the superscription is either entirely meaningless, or it must designate the proper author; notwithstanding that this has already been decided otherwise, comp. on Ps. lxxxvi., lxxxviii. The designation cannot be accounted for on the ground of resemblance to the Psalms of Asaph. For though, undoubtedly, a certain relationship can be traced between all the Psalms, which bear the name of Asaph, comp. Introd. to Ps. lxxix. yet this is not at all of such a kind as to have led these Psalms to be ranged under the same name. It lies so little upon the surface, that we should hardly have suspected it, if we had not had our attention drawn to it by the resemblance of the name. What a diversity, for example, exists between Ps. lxxv. and lxxvi., and Ps. l. and lxxiii.? That the historical books do not speak of Asaph, but of the sons of Asaph, proves nothing. It is carefully to be noted, what is but too often overlooked, that the supersciptions themselves bear a poetical character. But in poetry nothing is more common than for the descendants to be ranked under the name of their common father. And it is still further to be urged, in proof of the derivation of the Psalms from Asaph, the analogy of the Psalms belonging to the other Davidic school of song, that of the sons of Korah.—Of the later Psalms of Asaph, one, Ps. lxxxiii., refers to Jehosaphat's war against the combined forces of the Edomites, Moabites, Ammonites, and other nations,—Ps. lxxx. to the carrying away of the ten tribes,—Ps. lxxv., lxxvi., to the Assyrian catastrophe: Ps. lxxvii.

was sung in prospect of the Chaldean invasion, and Ps. lxxiv., Ps. lxxix., after the devastation this had occasioned. All the later Psalms of Asaph, accordingly, are connected with a particular historical occasion, in accordance with the whole character of the later Psalmodic poetry. On the other hand, the Psalms ascribed to Asaph of the time of David are not so much tied to the historical ground; only Ps. lxxviii. bears respect to determinate historical relations.

4. The name of the sons of Kora s attached to Ps. xlii.–xlix., lxxxiv.–lxxxix. See the Introd. to Ps. xlii., xliii. In the genealogies, 1 Chron. vi. 16 ss. the family of Heman, who is named along with Asaph and Etham as a chief musician to David, is traced back to Korah. There, too, in ver. 18, the sons of Heman are mentioned along with himself as having a share in the sacred music. The more minute distribution of the shares is given in 1 Chron. xxv., where the fourteen sons of Heman, given by name in ver. 4, are reported to have been set by David as so many leaders in the twenty-four classes of singers, every one of which consisted of twelve members. According to ver. 7, 9, ss., these classes of singers were formed, not only of the sons of the sons, but also of the brethren, *i. e.*, of the relatives of the three chief musicians of David, who had to play the first parts in the songs of the sanctuary. (Lavater: Those twenty-four sons were masters of song, or precentors, and each had under them twelve brethren or relatives.) Comp. the similar case in 1 Chron. xxvi. 8, where, besides the sons, also the sons of the sons, and their brethren, or relatives, are mentioned.—With the family of the Korahites, David had appeared at an early period in close connection. In 1 Chron. xii. 1 ss., the valiant men are mentioned, who before the death of Saul came to Ziklag, to participate with David in his troubles, and espouse his cause—first, certain of the tribe of Benjamin, then, ver. 6, five Korahites, and among those Asarel, who reappears in chap. xxv. 18, comp. ver. 4, among the sons of Heman. From the companions of the conflict came latterly companions in the composition of sacred song. But the band which joined itself to David was perpetually the same, that of those who were associated in faith toward the God of Israel. The head of the Korahitic classes of singers, Heman, was musical, but not, like Asaph, at the same time poetically gifted, comp. Introd. on Ps. lxxxviii. Probably, in the times of David, the gift of sacred song was not participated by any of his sons, but by some one in the circle of brothers or relatives. This explains why, in the superscriptions of the Psalms, neither Heman is named, nor the sons of Heman, but the sons of Korah, whence it arose, that in the later history the distribution of the pieces appeared, not under the name of the sons of Heman, but under that of the sons of Korah, comp. 2 Chron. xx. 19.—

The Psalms of the sons of Korah are, in all, fourteen, in striking and certainly not accidental agreement with the fourteen Korahitic classes of singers. Of these seven belong to the times of David and Solomon :—Ps. xliv., composed on occasion of the invasion of the Edomites ; Ps. xlii., xliii., lxxxiv., lxxxvi., at the period of Absalom's rebellion ; Ps. xlix., without any historical reference, though the general character of the theme shows it to belong to an early period ; it is a sort of appendage, indeed, to Ps. xxxvii. and lxxiii. of David's time ; Ps. xlv., which belongs to the age of Solomon. The other seven are of later date ;—Ps. xlvii., xlviii., belong to the time of Jehosaphat ; Ps. xlvi. and lxxxvii. appear, from the lively expression of joy in them, to have been called forth by the events of Hezekiah's reign ; Ps. lxxxviii. and lxxxix., belong to the times immediately before the captivity ; Ps. lxxxv. is undetermined. The Psalms of the sons of Korah, on the whole, proceed in a manner strikingly parallel to those of Asaph.—The writers of the Korahitic school, not content with concealing their own names, and ascribing their productions to the entire school to which they belonged, go so far in their self-denial as to sing from the bosom of David. Ps. xlii., xliii., lxxxiv., and lxxxvi., which last is also pervaded with references to the Psalms of David, and to the honour of Heman and Etham, in Ps. lxxxviii., lxxxix.—facts, for which nothing is to be found analogous in the productions of the other Psalmists.

5. Solomon is the author of Ps. lxxii., cxxvii.
6. ,, ,, Ps. xci., c.
7. ,, ,, Ps. civ.-vii.
8. ,, ,, Ps. cxi.-xix.
9. ,, ,, the ten nameless Pilgrim-songs, Ps. cxx. ss.
10 ,, ,, Ps. cxxxv.-xxxvii., and cxlvi.
11. ,, ,, Ps. cxlvii.-l.

Thus, leaving out Moses, we have ten writers of Psalms, divided into two groups of five, one before, the other after the Captivity.

IV. THE SUPERSCRIPTIONS OF THE PSALMS.

These refer first, though very rarely, much more rarely than is commonly supposed, to the musical accompaniments of the Psalms. Of this nature, besides the למנצח only the following are בנגינות, Ps. iv, על עלמות, after the virgin manner, Ps. xlvi., על השמינית,

vi., על הגתית Ps. viii., lxxxi., lxxxiv. All the other expressions which have sometimes been drawn into the same category, are rather to be taken as an enigmatical description of the subject. Secondly, the superscriptions name the authors. Or, thirdly, they indicate the character of the song, as is the case with תפלה, משכיל, מכתם, שיר, תהלה, and the very common מזמור. Finally, the subject, Ps. xlv., or the occasion, or the destination: for example, song for pilgrims.

In regard to the existence of the superscriptions and their fulness, there is a marked difference between the different authors of the Psalms. They appear in the most regular and extended form in the Psalms of David. Peculiar to him is (1) the announcing of the historical occasion, which is given in thirteen Psalms, and, following the chronological order, as follows: "When Saul sent, and they watched the house to kill him," Ps. lix.; "On account of the words of Kush, the Benjamite," Ps. vii.; "When Doeg the Edomite came," Ps. lii.; "When he feigned himself mad before Abimelech, and he drove him away and he departed," Ps. xxxiv.; "When he fled before Saul into the cave," Ps. lvii.; "When the Ziphites came," Ps. liv.; "When the Philistines found him at Gath," Ps. lvi.; "When he overcame Aram of the two rivers," Ps. lx.; "When Nathan the prophet came to him, as he had come in to Bathsheba," Ps. li.; "When he fled before Absalom his son," Ps. iii.; "When he was in the wilderness of Judah," Ps. lxiii.; "A song for the consecration of the house," Ps. xxx.; finally, Ps. xvii., "When the Lord had delivered him out of the hand of all his enemies, and out of the hand of Saul,"—a superscription which is not entirely of the same sort as the others, as they are simply historical; they also make up the number twelve. These superscriptions are not designed to illustrate the Psalms to which they are prefixed, but to form a memorial of those events which had gone most deeply to the heart of David. This is rendered clear by the circumstance, that such superscriptions are frequently wanting in the Psalms, which have a historical bearing, such as Ps. xxxii., lxi., lxii., lxviii., and again stand at the head of some, which are of a more general character, for ex. Ps. lix., xxxiv. It is also a confirmation of what we state, that no two notices ever refer to the same situation, as also the fact, that it is only in the Psalms of David that the historical occasion is given, which admits of explanation only on the latter supposition, not on the former. (2.) Peculiar to the Psalms of David is the enigmatical designation of the subject-matter and object, which is but rarely to be met with besides, and these obviously as a matter of imitation only in the Psalms of David's singers. (3.) The

לַמְנַצֵּחַ, to the chief musician, which, besides, is prefixed only to those of David's signers; and the Selah also occurs only in the same. This last, according to the reckoning of Delitzsch, occurs 17 times in the First Book, 30 times in the Second, 20 times in the Third, 4 times in the Fifth Book, in all 71 times, and not 73 as was stated, after Gesenius, in vol. i., p. 46.

The superscriptions appear in their regular and extended form in the Davidic Psalms of the First and Second Book, and in the serial Psalms of the two last books, only with this difference, that in the latter no historical occasions are given, for this simple reason, that Psalms of an individual character are less appropriate for having a place assigned them in the Psalmodic cycles. Ps. cxlii. forms but an apparent exception. From the simple: Of David, the superscriptions rise in the Psalms that are framed as Psalms of David, through various intermediate stages, comp. Ps. cxli., xl., xlii., up to the extended one of Ps. cii.: "A prayer of the afflicted, when he is overwhelmed and poureth out his complaint before the Lord," which in originality is not to be compared to any of the superscriptions of the Psalms of David's singers. Precisely the same gradation is to be found also in the Davidic Psalms of the two first books. The: "To the chief musician," reappears too in the third division of the Psalms of David, as does also the Selah, while in the fourth and fifth books neither of the two occurs.

Next to the Psalms of David, as concerns the regularity and fulness of the superscriptions, stand those of the singers. But there is found here the wonderful result, that all the peculiar designations used in the superscriptions of these Psalms, with the solitary exception of: A song of the beloved, in Ps. xlv., and of the עַל עַלְמוֹת in Ps. xlvi., have been borrowed from the superscriptions of the Psalms of David. The singers of David thus designed to indicate their dependence on their master, out of whose soul they wished even in fronte to be regarded as singing in Ps. xlii., xliii., lxxxiv., lxxxvi. They pleased themselves with bending and applying that which had proceeded from him. They borrowed from him the לַמְנַצֵּחַ, Ps. xlii., xliv., xlv., xlvi., xlvii., lxxv., lxxxviii.; and the מַשְׂכִּיל, Ps. xlii., xliv., xlv., lxxiv., lxxviii., lxxx., lxxxi., lxxxviii., the Davidic source of which is to be found in Ps. xxxii. —see Introd. to that Psalm. The: Upon lilies, in Ps. xlv., lxxx., rests upon Ps. lx. and lxix., which lies clear as day, especially in Ps. lxxx. The: Destroy not, in Ps. lxxv., is taken from Ps. lvii.—lix., "The chief musician upon Jeduthun," in Ps. lxxvii., is from Ps. lxii. The: "A testimony of Asaph," in Ps. lxxx., rests upon Ps. lx. The: "After the manner of Gath," in Ps. lxxxi., lxxxiv., is from Ps. viii.

The: "A prayer of David," in Ps. lxxxvi., from Ps. xvii. The: "Upon sickness," in Ps. lxxxviii. from Ps. liii.

In the other Psalms (such as were composed by others than David and his singers) the superscriptions are either short and incomplete—in particular they all want the names of the author—as Ps. xcii.: "A song for the Sabbath;" Ps. xcviii., "A psalm;" Ps. c., "A song;" the "Song of the pilgrims," in Ps. cxx. ss.—or they are entirely wanting, Ps. xci., xciii.-xcvii., xcix., civ.-vii., cxi.-xix., cxxxv.-xxxvii., cxlvi.-l.

In recent times, since Vogel in his treatise—Inscriptiones Psalmorum serius demum additas videri, Halle 67—commenced the assault on the superscriptions, they have been in great disfavour. It has become usual to deny, that they were affixed by the authors of the Psalms, nay even to maintain that they do not rest upon any proper historical tradition, but were attached merely on conjecture by persons of later times. This is one of the many points, in regard to which we can easily suppose tradition to exert a power, and that, too, quite improper, unreasonable over those, who boast of being entirely free from its influence, and who disdain to regard it, where it has a just claim to be heard. The origin of the opposition to the superscriptions, belongs to a period when rationalism blindly fought against all that was settled and acknowledged, without carefully inquiring whether rationalism actually required such a conflict to be maintained. By and bye the opposition contracted itself, and became more and more confined to what rationalism as naturalism could not allow to stand. People had meanwhile been accustomed to attach so little value to the superscriptions of the Psalms, that this return to sober thought has been of small avail for them. Ewald still says, Poet.. B. i. p. 224, "Of all these appended notices there is not one which we can venture to ascribe to the author himself."

We shall not repeat here, what others, in particular Eichhorn, Einl. p. 627, has said in favour of the superscriptions, nor what has already been urged in particular Psalms in proof of the originality of the superscriptions. We shall at present only endeavour to supplement these by a few appropriate general remarks.

If the superscriptions were added in later times from conjecture, how is it then to be explained, that they are not found precisely in those Psalms, in regard to which conjecture might so readily have supplied an occasion, the non-Davidic Psalms of the fourth and fifth book, while they very frequently occur, where conjecture is utterly destitute of a handle? Ewald cannot conceal from himself the embarrassment in which he would be placed by the question, "By what marks a collector of later times attributed the one Psalm to David himself, the other to some one or other of his singers?" And again he says, "Why this song

has been ascribed to the Korahites, that to Asaph or Etham, I know not."

The rejection of the superscriptions belongs to a period when little respect generally was had to the text of the Old Testament. But it is unreasonable to endeavour still to perpetuate the arbitrariness, which arose in a time of general scepticism, now that this has come to be abandoned—unreasonable to withhold from the superscriptions of the Psalms that regard which is willingly accorded to the superscriptions of the Prophets.

The facts as already represented in connection with the superscriptions demands their originality. The similarity in the superscriptions of all the Psalms ascribed to David, cannot be explained if they were appended by this person or that after his own fancy; it can be so, only on the supposition of David himself being the author. By no other supposition, also, than the originality of the superscriptions, can a satisfactory explanation be given of the fact, that the superscriptions stand in the most regular and complete form before the Psalms of David, then in those of the singers of David, while in the remaining Psalms they occur more sparingly, and in a humbler style. David was the originator of the superscriptions. In the consciousness he possess of his personal position, as "the man, who has been raised on high, lovely in the songs of Israel," he had a determinate occasion to prefix his name to his songs, which only as Psalms of David were entirely to the church that which they actually were, and which partly had a quite personal origin—for ex. Ps. cxxxviii., xlv. It was natural for him to erect a memorial of the leading events of his life, by mentioning these in the superscriptions of the Psalms, of which they furnished the occasion. The enigmatical devices, which are but the natural productions of his thoroughly poetical mind, were by much too poetical, spirited, and profound, for any later collector. It is very natural that David should connect himself with those who sang under "his directing hand" (1 Chron. xxv. 2, and on the על ידי there, see in Introd. to Ps. cxviii.) Their names could the less fail, as the mention of these served to bring out their relation to David, and reflected honour upon him. As thus the designating superscriptions properly belong to David, it is very natural that we should not find them in the case of those writers of Psalms, who were not led, like the singers of David, through their position to point immediately to him, or to connect themselves with him. We ought to consider the extended superscriptions, in particular the designation of the authors, as a privilege of David and those belonging to him. It is only on the supposition of the originality of the superscriptions, that we can also explain the fact of every thing peculiar, with some unimportant exceptions, in the

superscriptions of the Psalms of David's singers being borrowed from David's own. With the singers themselves such a borrowing was quite natural, and indicative of their intimate relation to David. But for a collector of later times the very idea was too fine, and altogether the way and manner of the borrowing and the application was too profound and original. These superscriptions could be regarded as the productions of hands accidentally employed, only so long as their close relation to the Davidic was not properly perceived and duly considered. Nor is the correspondence of the Selah with the superscriptions to be overlooked. The fact that this occurs only in the Psalms, which are ascribed to David and his singers, is easily explained on the supposition of the originality of the superscriptions. The Selah belongs, both as to the word and the meaning expressed by it, originally to David, and from him passed to his singers. The other Psalmists did not consider themselves justified in appropriating this distinctive mark of royalty. But on the contrary supposition, that the superscriptions were added conjecturally by later hands, this riddle is just as incapable of explanation as the other, why the halleluiah is not found in any of the Psalms, which bear the name of David or his singers. In like manner, if the superscriptions have proceeded from collectors of later times, how can it be explained that the לַמְנַצֵּחַ to the chief musician, stands merely in the superscriptions of such Psalms as are ascribed to David and his singers? That the word could only be regarded as coming from the author himself, has been already proved in the Introduction to Ps. iv.

A series of reasons for the originality of the superscriptions is presented by the Books of Samuel, which were composed in the earlier part of the king-period, and, at all events, before the Babylonish captivity. Comp. 1 Sam. xxvii. 6, where the author mentions that Ziklag had belonged to the kings of Judah till his day.

That David was in the habit of prefixing superscriptions appears incontestably from his last words, 2 Sam. xxiii. 1.

The introduction to the Song of David upon the death of Saul and Jonathan, 2 Sam. i., possesses a character nearly allied to the historical superscriptions of the Psalms—for example, to that of Ps. xviii. The "to teach" there used also exactly agrees with Ps. lx.; and the קֶשֶׁת, bow, as an emblematical designation of the subject, corresponds to the enigmatical devices in the superscriptions of many of the Davidic Psalms. The author probably, by an easy variation, changed the superscription into an introduction—a supposition that is rendered the more credible from his having done something quite similar in 2 Sam. xxii., as compared with Ps. xviii.: the "Of David, who spake," being changed into "And David spake," in order to make the song accord

with the historical connection. The substitution of "And he spake, that one teach the children of Israel the bow," instead of "the bow-song, the song upon Jonathan, the man excellent in the use of the bow" (comp. ver. 22), is certainly one that did not come from the hand of the author of the Books of Samuel. It bears entirely the character of the superscriptions of David, in which the poetical spirit breaks out even in the introduction to the song, not first in the song itself.

If all the poetical pieces of David which are preserved in the Books of Samuel, are provided with original superscriptions, the conclusion is not far to seek, that David generally wrote nothing without a superscription.

There occur, farther, in the Books of Samuel, some references to particular superscriptions of the Psalms of David. We have already noticed the reference to the superscription of Ps. xviii. A reference to that of Ps. xxxiv. is to be found in 1 Sam. xxi. 14, comp. Introd. to that Ps. According to these analogies we would also explain the literal agreement between 1 Sam. xxiii. 19 and the superscription of Ps. liv., on the supposition that the author of the Books of Samuel had respect to the superscription. So also 1 Sam. xix. 11 in relation to Ps. lix.

The circumstance of the Song of Hezekiah in Isaiah xxxviii. 9 possessing a superscription, which manifestly formed an original part of it —"writing of Hezekiah, the king of Judah, when he was sick and recovered from his sickness," this alone constitutes a strong case against those who deny the originality of the superscriptions. The closer examination, however, of the construction of this superscription yields still more important results. It is evidently formed after those of the Psalms of David. Let the superscriptions especially be compared of Ps. lvi.—"Of David, a secret, when the Philistines found him in Gath;" Ps. lvii. "Of David, a secret, when he fled before Saul in the cave;" Ps. lix. "Of David, a secret, when Saul sent." The ל is common in both cases before the name of the author—although here it was not necessary, as the stat. const. would have served well enough to indicate with כ the occasioning circumstance. But of quite peculiar import is the מכתב here, in relation to the מכתם there. The somewhat bald expression מכתב, writing, points to some original passage to which it alludes, and from such allusion it is to derive its meaning and become pregnant. It is manifestly a variation of מכתם in the superscriptions of the Psalms of David, as in the Song itself the חלד of the Psalms is changed into חדל. Hezekiah, with whom it was very natural to borrow from his great progenitor, as he also restored his Psalms to their proper place in the public worship or God, 2 Chron. xxix. 30, did not venture to desig-

nate his song after his prototype, a מכתם, a secret, or song of deep import. He weakened the מכתם into מכתב, humbly to indicate the distance at which he stood from David. In fitting accordance with this reference to the superscriptions of the Psalms of David proceed the references to the same Psalms and those of David's singers in the song itself. The very beginning, "I spake, in the midst of my days must I wander through the gates of hell," rests upon Ps. cii. 24, "I said, O my God take me not away in the half of my days." The first half of ver. 11 rests upon Ps. xxvii. 13. The חדל in the second member is a variation of חלד in Ps. xlix. 1, comp. on Ps. xvii. 14. Ver. 18 rests upon Ps. vi. 5, xxx. 9. The beginning of ver. 20 is from Ps. lxx. 1.

The fact that all these references are made to the Psalms, which, according to the superscriptions, belong to David and his singers, and which, therefore, already existed in the time of Hezekiah, as they also formed a model to which he would naturally look, is likewise a proof of the superscriptions. The caprice of later times would certainly not have managed it so. We find precisely the same thing in the Song of Jonas, which belongs to the first period of written prophecy; comp. on ver. 4 Ps. xlii. 7; on ver. 5 Ps. xxxi. 22; on ver. 6 Ps. xviii. 4; lxix. 1, 2; on ver. 8 Ps. xviii. 6; on ver. 9 Ps. xxxi. 6.

A very strong proof in favour of the originality of the superscriptions is afforded by the beginning and close of the third chapter of Habakkuk. The תפלה לחבקוק is in imitation of the תפלה לדוד of Ps. xvii. The expression: upon errings, carries an allusion to the: erring in the superscription of Psalm vii. The למנצח בנגינתי to the chief musician upon my stringed instrument, of the close, alludes to the superscription of Ps. iv. and vi. We have the less reason to doubt an imitation of David, as besides the למנצח, the Selah is also borrowed from him, which never occurs elsewhere, excepting in the Psalms of David himself and those of "his singers." Add, that the Song of Habakkuk itself contains a number of undeniable references to the Psalms, quite parallel to those in the superscription. The most distinct is the quotation from Ps. lxxvii.; comp. on that Ps. The two last verses are mere echoes of the Davidic Psalms, especially of Ps. xviii., from which ver. 19 is wholly taken, with which stands also in immediate connection the conclusion formed after the superscriptions of David. Ver. 14 rests upon Ps. x. 8-10. Finally, in this imitation of the superscriptions of the Psalms we have the key to this portion of the writings of Habakkuk. Such borrowings evidently indicate that here prophecy goes hand in hand with the sacred lyric, and was designed to raise such emotions as the sacred lyric was employed to awaken among the community. That the song

was actually sung in the sanctuary is manifestly but a fiction. Behind the lyrical character, which it carries on its front, the prophetical lies concealed; and it stands in such close connection with the foregoing prediction that it cannot be separated from that. Here, too, has an unpoetical realism mistaken the proper exposition.

Having now set forth our reasons for the originality of the superscriptions, we shall farther cast a glance at the reasons which hitherto have been and still are urged against them.

"If thus," says Ewald, Poet. B. i., p. 214, "all the songs, whose authors are designated, must be derived only from David and his singers, how does it then happen, that the Psalter names no other writers from the many other ages and centuries?—How are we to explain it, that the Psalter has announced no other poets in the superscriptions?" But would we gain the missing names, if we should set aside those given in the superscriptions? That the problem is not to be solved at the expense of the superscriptions, is clear from the circumstance which stands side by side with the other, that in the historical books no other composers of sacred songs have been named, excepting David and his singers. But both problems admit of an easy explanation on the ground, that the royal Psalmist with his train was so indisputably regarded in Israel as the master of sacred song, that beside his name and that of his singers, who were linked to him, and his successor upon the throne, no other name could appear, nor would any one venture to mention one. The want of names at the non-Davidic Psalms goes hand in hand with other facts—as, that none of these Psalms possess an individual and personal character, that in all of them the Psalmist appears only as the organ of the community, that the later groups of Psalms for the most part form but a kind of setting to the precious stone of the Davidic Psalms, that they often borrow from these in particular points, and refer back to them, that the entire mass of the later poetry proclaims itself as an echo of that of David. Even in regard to the productions of the singers of David the individual authors, with the exception of Asaph, did not venture out of their concealment; and he is precisely the one individual whom the history also mentions beside David; see Introd. to Ps. l. and lxxiv. Behind his name, again, the timid and unpretending members of his singing families of later times, who composed Psalms, concealed themselves.

"The LXX. omit the name of David in the group, Ps. cxx.-xxxiv. manifestly because their Hebrew copy had not that appendage." Ewald p. 219. So also V. Lengerke in his compilation upon the Psalms. But allegations of this sort proceed upon an entire misapprehension as to the nature of the Alexandrian version, and can now no longer be re-

cognised as just. With perfect right has the circumstance been urged for the antiquity of the superscriptions, that they already lay in great part beyond the comprehension of the LXX. How can it be imagined, then, that some of them were introduced into the text after their time? But a proof is here to be found for the originality of the superscriptions in the fact, that the arrangement of the pilgrim-songs takes for granted the composition by David of the Psalms which bear his name; see Introd. to Ps. cxx.-xxxiv.

"There is so great a dissimilarity among many of those songs, that they cannot possibly be all ascribed to the same writer." But as soon as we abandon the wrong supposition, that all the Psalms bearing the name of Asaph are to be ascribed to the same individual, then all that can be alleged in this respect limits itself to the Psalms which bear the name of David. But David would never have had such a call, nor attained to such glory upon this territory, if his poetical gift had not been a comprehensive one—if it had been only of a limited description, if he had not made his voice roam at large. What enabled him to rise so singularly high above the other sacred bards, also gave him the capacity of sinking among the lowest. With all his variety a thread of unity still runs through all his Psalms, as has already been sufficiently pointed out in the exposition. *

But this always remains the chief ground of the opponents of the superscriptions—that the contents of the Psalms in a great many cases prove the incorrectness of the superscriptions. But confidently as their criticism comes out on this point, it may still be permitted us to indulge at least very serious doubts regarding its solidity, until they succeed in coming to an agreement, not merely on the negative, but also on the positive side of the matter. So long as those who rank as our opponents, such as Ewald and Hitzig, differ so immensely from each other regarding the proper age of the several pieces, the thought will be very natural that the opposition to the superscriptions is to be sought, not in any flaw in them, but in the arbitrariness of the critics. Our exposition has endeavoured to shew, that in no one Psalm does the matter stand at variance with the superscription; but, on the contrary, that the two are always in perfect harmony with each other.

* What Ewald in his Prophets i., p. 73, has said of Isaiah, may be applied analagously to David: "The chief point here is, that we cannot ascribe to Isaiah, as to the other prophets, a peculiar idiosyncrasy, and some favourite tinge pervading the whole representation. He is not the pre-eminently lyrical, or the pre-eminently rhetorical and hortatory prophet; but constantly as the subject requires, he has ready at command every kind of speech and every variety of mode; and it is precisely this that here constitutes his greatness, as it is generally one of his most distinguishing characteristics."

V. THE FORMAL ARRANGEMENT OF THE PSALMS.

The Psalms are destitute of the most important means, through which poetry in other countries acquires for itself the character of that artificial structure, which is so closely connected with its nature,—the employment of metres and rhymes; to which last there are only some feeble and merely accidental approaches. As a substitute for this want, the parallelism of the numbers of the verse has primarily been employed, corresponding to the necessity of an alternate rise and fall. On this we need not enter into any investigation, as it has already been sufficiently elucidated. But that the necessity has been felt for a formal arrangement also beyond the narrow bounds of a single verse, is perfectly obvious from the existence of a number of alphabetical Psalms. Proceeding from this fact Koester sought with considerable power to establish the existence of a strophical arrangement also in the other Psalms. But he did not perceive the true principle of this. The arrangement —so the author believes he has proved in his commentary—is formed in the non-alphabetical Psalms with few, and these even doubtful exceptions, by means of the numbers, which were regarded by the Israelites as having a kind of sacred and important meaning—viz., 3, 4, 7, 10, 12; see on the origin of such numbers the author's work on Balaam, p. 70 ss. These numbers often also determine, besides the groups of verses, the position of the names of God.

A very simple arrangement by the numbers already exists in the song composed by Moses, Ps. xc. But the principle on which it proceeds was carried out by David, and improved to the development of its inexhaustible variety. The later writers trode in his footsteps, though without any slavish imitation. Even the last produce some new forms.

One can have the less difficulty in recognizing this principle of numbers, as of all others it has the closest relation to the alphabetical arrangement. Then also, as the meaning of certain numbers undoubtedly plays in other respects a very important part in ancient Israel, this arrangement may be regarded as the peculiarly Israelitish one. Admitting that what Bähr in his Symbolik of the Mosaic religion, and what Bertheau still more at large has since remarked, in his seven groups of Mosaic laws, regarding the import of numbers in the Pentateuch, stands much in need still of criticism and careful consideration—admitting also that the application of this principle as made by Bertheau, will not hold to the full; there will after all be found no inconsiderable part of precious metal to result from the process. Already the fact, that the fundamental law, the decalogue, has its form determined by a regard to

number secures a firm starting point for all future investigations. Kurtz, in his Einheit der Genesis, p. lxvii. ss., has noticed, that Genesis consists of ten groups or books of narratives. David paid regard to the principle of numbers, even in his public arrangements. Thus he divided, according to 1 Chron. xxv., the singers into twenty-four classes, each one of twelve members, and the twenty-four was divided by ten and fourteen. In the account given of Job's children and flocks, in ch. i., the numbers three and seven, and the number ten, arising from the combination of these, and of the double five, are employed, and both these numbers and the number twelve play an important part in the arrangement of the book, which it would take us too long to point out at length here. In the first chapter of Isaiah the representation made of the sinful revolt of the people is completed in the number seven, divided into three and four —four designations for the idea of sinfulness, and three for that of revolt. So also do the designations applied in ver. 6 to the miserable condition of the people, which their apostacy entailed upon them, make up the number seven, and the seven is here again divided into three and four. How in that prophet the grouping also is regulated by a regard to numbers, we shall shew by the example at least of one section. In ch. lii. 13-ch. liii., the two concluding verses coincide with the introduction, ch. lii. 13-15, in the number five, the signature of the half, the incomplete. The main part liii. 1-10, completes itself in the number ten. This again is divided into seven, which comprises the humiliation and suffering, and three, which refers to the glorification of the servant of God. The seven is divided by three and four. In the three the suffering of the servant of God is represented in itself, in the four its cause, its vicarious nature. In the gospel of Matthew the genealogy is regulated by a respect to numbers—the blessings in the sermon on the mount—the Lord's prayer—the parables in ch. xiii. That the structure of the Apocalypse is entirely determined by them, has at last been established by Züllig, Th. i. p. 115 ss.

This principle of number has been charged with super-refinement, and more than cabalistical foolery. But when it is understood, that the numbers were used for the most part without respect to the original ground of their sacredness and significance, and merely in a formal point of view, this objection loses all its force. Any kind of measured discourse, not usual among ourselves, is exceedingly apt to assume the appearance of over-refinement. A people unacquainted with rhyme would find great difficulty in regarding that as a legitimate form of measured discourse.

Then the further objection has been passed against the theory of number (comp. Sommer, Bibl. Abh. i. s. 148), that it rests upon the false ground of the correctness of our present division into verses. But this

division, which in other respects also has strong reasons on its side (comp. Ewald, Poet. B. j. s. 90), is on this account placed beyond doubt, that the arrangement everywhere comes clearly and distinctly out. It does not rest on the discernment of later editors of the text, but upon the stability of tradition, to which we also owe the correctness of our vowel punctuation.

Besides the arrangement from numbers, there is found in the Psalms also another from the alphabet. But that this is secondary in relation to the former, appears from this, that no traces exist of it before the time of David, and that the greater part of the Psalms are arranged on the principle of number, without respect to the alphabet; while in the alphabetical Psalms according to the rule, in the older ones without any exception, there can be pointed out at the same time a respect to the import of numbers. A doubt can scarcely be entertained that David is the author of this arrangement. For it is first employed by him, and speaking comparatively, with great frequency; so that the later instances may on this account alone be regarded as bearing an imitative character: (if this method of arrangement had possessed a national root, it would have been more commonly employed in later times); and it is a further proof of the same, that it occurs with David in the simplest and the most natural forms.

We have four Psalms of David in which the commencement of the verses is marked by the letters of the alphabet in their regular order, Ps. xxv., xxxiv., xxxvii., cxlv., and the three number of whose verses corresponds to the number of letters in the alphabet, Ps. xxxiii., xxxviii., ciii. This last can the less be regarded as accidental, since also in the Lamentations, ch. v. is alphabetical only as to the number of verses, since Ps. xxxiii. stands close beside the properly alphabetical Psalm, xxxiv., since in the closing verse of Ps. xxxviii., there is an express allusion to the alphabetical character, and, finally, Ps. ciii. is a sort of side-piece to Ps. cxlv. To this heptad of Davidic Psalms, divided as usual into three and four, a later bard, the only one that in this respect trode in David's footsteps, added three more alphabetical Psalms, cxi., cxii., cxix.—the first and the last that belonged to him of his cycle, which is opened with three Psalms of David; so that the supposition of his dependence upon David on this point also can the more readily be entertained. These later alphabetical Psalms make up with those of David the total number of ten, while the more strictly alphabetical Psalms of David are contained in the number seven. If we add besides the two Psalms of David, in which there is an attempt at alphabetical arrangement, we shall have altogether a dozen of alphabetical Psalms; so that

the significant numbers will thus be found coming all distinctly out in the Psalms of this description.

The assertion, already refuted in the Introd. to Ps. xxv. and xxxvii., that the origin of the alphabetical arrangement belongs to a very late period, is sufficiently disproved by the fact, that by much the greater proportion of the alphabetical Psalms are ascribed to David. Whatever value we may attach to the superscriptions, this would certainly have been very rarely done, if such Psalms had all been the productions of a later period. To this we may add the circumstance noticed by Sommer, Bibl. Abh. i. s. 94, that the alphabetical arrangement in the Lamentations of Jeremiah bears so refined and artificial a character, that it necessarily pre-supposes a simpler form.

The alphabetical arrangement in the alphabetical Psalms of David is distinguished by strong peculiarities from that in the later Psalms—a fact which cannot be explained by those who deny the originality of the superscriptions, and consider them to be of arbitrary fabrication. 1. Those Psalms are peculiar to David, which are alphabetical as to number, and nothing analogous to them exists in all the Old Testament, excepting the fifth chapter of Lamentations. 2. In the alphabetical Psalms of David, the simplest forms are found—for every letter of the alphabet a verse, or a pair of verses, while in Ps. cxi. and cxii., every half verse is distingnished by a letter, and in Ps. cxix., each letter has a portion of eight verses appropriated to it, every one of which commences with the same letter—a pretty difficult matter. The measures, which may be regarded as both smaller and larger than the natural one, belong to the same author: so that the intention of departing from the already existing simple form is the less to be mistaken,—an intention which discovers itself still more manifestly in Jeremiah. 3. In the later alphabetical Psalms, the alphabetical arrangement is carried through with perfect regularity, as it is also in Jeremiah, with a single exception, where still, however, there is no omission of a letter, but only a transposition. On the other hand, in all the Davidic Psalms there are to be found irregularities, the attempt to account for which lately by Von Sommer, from the corruption of the text, is put to flight by the fact, that they occur only in the Psalms of David, while the very long Ps. cxix. is entirely free of them. But if this supposition is to be rejected, so also, and more decidedly is another, that the deviations proceeded from the difficulty of preserving entire the alphabetical arrangement without injury to the sense, and unnatural constraint; which is disproved by the observation that, with a single unimportant exception, all these deviations can be explained on the same ground, viz., that in these Psalms, besides the alphabetical arrangement, that also after the significant numbers has a

place which required a certain sacrifice of the other. That in Ps. xxxiv., xxxvii., cxlv., all the deviations have arisen from this concurrence of the two arrangements, has been already shown in the Introd. to the respective Psalms. The two first are regulated by the decimal division, which stands in a very close relation to the alphabetical, which we are also the less entitled to overlook, as it unquestionably exists in the alphabetical Psalms, cxi., cxii., and, still further, in Ps. xxxviii., which is alphabetical as to number. The connection of the decimal division and the alphabetical arrangement is also, in Ps. xxv., the object aimed at. It must fall into two decades, and, at the same time, have the entire number of its verses to correspond to the letters of the alphabet. This was accomplished so, that the Psalm was made to possess a commencing and concluding verse out of the alphabetical arrangement. But, then, two of the twenty-two letters of the alphabet must thereby disappear. The lot is made to fall upon ק as the least important of all the letters; and then א and ב are made to divide between them one verse; see the Introd. to the Psalm. Thus all the deviations admit of being explained from the concurrence of the two arrangements, with the solitary exception of the double ר instead of ק and ר—the only case in which the Psalmist has abandoned the alphabetical arrangement for the sense.

We shall now speak of the two Psalms, in which there is found a mere approach to the alphabetical arrangement, Ps. ix., x. Notwithstanding the greatness of their deviations, the opinion has also been propounded in regard to them, that the alphabetical arrangement was there also originally preserved with exactness, and was only disturbed afterwards by negligence and caprice. But besides that this view proceeds upon an entirely false opinion of the state of the Heb. text generally, and, in particular, of that of the Psalms, the integrity of which is established by indisputable facts, such as the preservation of the names of God in their original position, and the arrangement according to the significant numbers; besides this, the following grounds decidedly oppose the opinion in question: 1. These Psalms could not have been originally purely alphabetical. They are distinguished from all other alphabetical Psalms by this, that they have a regular continuity of thought, a steady progression, while the contrary of this is the case with a purely alphabetical Psalm: see Introd. to Ps. xxv. xxxvii.—2. That the alphabetical character was not stringently maintained, and might, therefore, be easily interrupted, is already indicated by the apparent anxiety to draw attention to it, both at the beginning and the close. In the two first verses of Ps. ix., each member of the verse begins with א; and also the last letter, the ת, does not rest satisfied with the first word

of Ps. x. 17, but occurs twice besides. In the regular alphabetical Psalms nothing of a like kind is to be found.—3. We have not some sort of fragments merely of an alphabetical arrangement before us, but the alphabetical always occurs in an important place. It concentrates itself at the beginning and the end, so that the three first and the four last letters of the alphabet stand in quite regular order. The second of the two Psalms begins with ל, the middle letter.—4. Along with the alphabetical arrangement, there proceeds another according to the significant numbers, of so artificial a kind that a strict adherence to the former could, on this account alone, scarcely be expected. Before we point out this more minutely, we must first give a representation of the strophe-division of those Psalms, and also exhibit the result, which presents itself in them respecting the names of God.

Ps. ix. consists of a great strophe, ver. 1-12, falling into two parts, thanksgiving and praise, each of six verses—three pairs of verses, and four small strophes, expressing prayer and confidence, each consisting of a pair of verses. In like manner, Ps. x. consists of a great strophe, ver. 2-11, the lamentation, and four small strophes, the prayer and confidence, each of a pair of verses, with the exception of the second in ver. 14, which has only one verse, but that composed of four members. Ver. 1 stands unconnected with the formal arrangement, and corresponds to the superscription in Ps. ix., the originality of which is borne witness to by this fact.

The name Jehovah occurs nine times in Ps. ix., the name Elohim once; in Ps. x. Jehovah five times, Elohim twice; in the whole, therefore, Jehovah occurs fourteen times, Elohim thrice; in Ps. ix. ten names of God, in Ps. x. seven.

All the significant numbers, too, are found in the two Psalms. The second part of Ps. x. is completed in the number seven—manifestly on purpose. For with the design merely of not exceeding the number seven, only one verse of four members is there assigned to the ך, instead of the otherwise common two verses of four members. Farther, the regular alphabetical commencement of verses, at the beginning and the close, also consists of the number seven. The whole has seventeen names of God, fourteen of the name Jehovah; Ps. x., seven names of God, and how much of design there was in this, is evident from the interchange of Jehovah and Elohim, which was obviously managed so as to bring out for the whole the numbers 17 and 14, and for Ps. x. the number seven.

The number seven is commonly in the Psalms, as also in the Apocalypse (comp. Bengel s. 66, ff. 213, Züllig Th. i. s. 123), divided into three and four. In the second part of Ps. x., ver. 12-14 are of one piece, as are also ver. 15-18. The beginning has three, and the con-

clusion four alphabetical commencements of verses. In Ps. x. three names of God stand in the main strophe, and four in the smaller strophes.

The whole has ten strophes. Ps. ix. has twenty verses, two decades. In Ps. x. the main strophe ten verses. Ps. ix. has ten names of God. With the tenth letter of the alphabet, י, the alphabetical arrangement in Ps. x. ceases, and there follows afterwards another strophe, without the alphabet.

The ten is regularly divided by the five. Each Psalm has five strophes. In the main strophe of Ps. x. this division is rendered manifest by the correspondence of ver. 6 with ver. 11. Of the ten names of God in Ps. ix., five are contained in the main strophe, and five in the smaller strophes. Both numbers, that of ten and seven, appear combined in the number of verses of Ps. x., and in the entire number of the names of God.

The main strophe of Ps. ix. is completed in the number twelve. So also in the same number are comprised the entire parts of the Psalm, ten strophes, then the superscription to that Psalm, and the introduction to Ps. x. The twelve is both times divided by the six. The main strophe of Ps. ix. has six couplets of verses, and falls into two parts, each of six verses. This division is referred to in the circumstance, that ver. 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, all begin with ו, the sixth letter of the alphabet, the introduction of which begins precisely at the commencement of the second part, and the peculiar prominence given to which (it is the only letter to which four verses have been assigned, and indeed so, that it returns at the commencement of all the verses) must point to the import attached to it.

As to the object of the alphabetical arrangement in this Psalm, there is first to be recognised the intention of pointing to the connection between the two Psalms, which form a pair. That this object has been accomplished, is evident from this, that the perception of the connection between the two Psalms, which undoubtedly proceeded on a recognition of their alphabetical character, led the LXX. to form them into one. Another purpose was to direct attention to the beginning and the compass of the particular strophes. The alphabetical arrangement is so far carried through, as completely to attain these two objects.

The criticism, which now again looks as if it would return, in its treatment of the text of the Old Testament, to the arbitrariness of the last quarter of the preceding century (Movers, Thenius, Sommer, etc.) might learn prudence from this example! It is of importance also here not to judge, but to know.

VI. THE ORIGIN OF THE EXISTING COLLECTION OF PSALMS, THEIR DIVISION INTO FIVE BOOKS, AND THEIR DIFFERENT NUMBERING.

There can be no doubt that collections of the Psalms of David and his singers were made at an early period. The deep and important bearing which they had from the outset in respect to the faith of the community, and the distinguished place that was assigned them in the services of the sanctuary (see 2 Chron. xxix. 30), does not permit us to entertain the idea that single psalms were left for centuries to fly about as scattered leaves. But it is equally certain that our present collection presents no traces of being formed out of such early collections. It has in no respect the character of a work done piecemeal, but is arranged from points of view that embrace the whole field. Its author, living at a time when psalmodic poetry had already ceased, had the entire body of existing Psalms before him, and formed the collection after those points of view.

The point of view that presented itself most readily, was the chronological. But the stringent application of this order could not be approved on reflection. David was unquestionably the founder of this kind of poetry. But by the chronological principle his glory in that respect would have been darkened, and the entire matter placed thereby in a false position, since in that case the Psalm of Moses must have stood at the head of the whole, while he still was only the solitary precursor of the Psalm poetry, a prophecy of it, and one which was to find its accomplishment in David. Then the character of a good many of David's Psalms, and those of his singers, raised great difficulties in the way of a chronological arrangement. These songs of David and his singers were not always of a personal cast, they not unfrequently left the historical ground, concerned themselves for the necessities of the church of all ages, and generally rose to the comprehensiveness and elevation of our church songs. For songs of this kind, which have no historical starting point, the chronological arrangement would have been unsuitable, even if the date of the composition of particular Psalms had been exactly known. But this consideration applied only to the songs of David and his singers. All the others had a historical basis, so that the chronological arrangement in them is the most natural, and in all respects the most advantageous.

The collector, however, endeavoured at the same time to avoid the objections which the chronological arrangement was fitted to suggest, and to make use of its advantages. After the model of the Pentateuch,

to which the Psalms are already on this account more nearly related than all the other books of Scripture, inasmuch as they, like it, were employed in divine worship, but still more as they contained in a manner the answer of the people to God's address to them in the law, and disclose the pious feelings which are called forth in the minds of believers by the word of God, he divided the collection into five books, the end of which, with the exception of the last, where no external mark was required, is indicated by a doxology. In the front he placed the Psalms of David and his singers, which occupy the three first books. In the two last books he put, in exact chronological order, all that remained from Moses to Nehemiah.

In the arrangement of the Psalms of David and his singers, the collector has allowed a marked influence to the distinction that exists among these Psalms as to the use respectively of the names Jehovah and Elohim. This distinction is confined to those Psalms, including also the later post-Davidic Psalms of Asaph and the sons of Korah, which in this, as in other respects, remain true to the older type. In the whole fourth book Elohim does not occur once, in the fifth only seven times, while Jehovah, according to the reckoning of Delitzsch (Symbolae ad Ps. illustrandos) occurs 236 times. In all those seven cases Elohim is found only in the Psalms of David—in Ps. cviii. six times, and once in Ps. cxliv. We merely notice, in passing, what important results grow out of these facts for the correctness of our text, and, at the same time, for the originality of the superscriptions. If these had been appended, as modern criticism would have it, by this person and that from mere conjecture, how should it then happen that precisely all the Elohim-Psalms have been assigned to David and his singers, and that not one of such Psalms has been left without their names?

Not merely are the Elohim-Psalms peculiar to the three first books, but also another characteristic, the sporadic occurrence of Elohim in the Jehovah-Psalms. Elohim had become so strange in later times, that only the Jehovah-Psalms of David were taken for insertion into the later cycles, with the exception alone of Psalm cviii., which could not have been omitted if Ps. cix. and cx. were to have a place.

That the origin of the Elohim-Psalms is to be ascribed to David is evident from the single fact, that these belong only to him and his singers, who shew themselves throughout dependent upon him. It is a farther evidence, that we can also give historical proof elsewhere of David's special predilection for this name; from the prayer of David in 2 Sam. vii., where it occurs redundantly, and also from passages, such as 1 Chron. xxviii. 20, where David says to Solomon, "Fear not, for Jehovah Elohim, my God, is with thee," xxix. 1.

Allusion was made in my Beitr. Th. II. s. 299, to the ground of the predilection exhibited in certain Psalms for the name: "In a multitude of passages, especially in the Psalms, Elohim was chosen with respect to the abuse of the name Jehovah, whereby the name, that properly was the stronger of the two, was changed into the weaker. The surrounding heathen, and the heathenishly inclined in Israel itself, recognized in Jehovah, indeed, the God of Israel, but not God absolutely, the possessor of the whole fulness of the Godhead. But better the Godhead than a God. In all such passages Jehovah is thrown into the background; Elohim by itself is equivalent to Jehovah Elohim. It was not necessary always expressly to name Jehovah, because he was the unquestionable property of Israel; it was only contested whether he was Elohim."

Upon the import of the collocation Jehovah Elohim, it is said in the same vol. s. 312: "The ground of the collocation is always to be found in the opposition it presents against partial representations of Jehovah, in the endeavour to explode the error that Jehovah was merely the God of Israel—an error by which Jehovah, in itself the higher appellation, became relatively the lower, so that it was elevated by the addition of Elohim, though strictly of inferior import. In this collocation the name Elohim stands upon the same line with Zebaoth, the God of worlds. A circumlocution of Jehovah Elohim is given in such passages as Ps. xviii. 31, "who is God but Jehovah," and Isa. xliv. 6, where Jehovah says, "Besides me there is no God;" Deut. xxxii. 39, "There is no Elohim besides me." We are presented with a formal commentary on the Jehovah Elohim in the words in which David breaks forth after he had received the promise through Nathan (1 Chron. xvii. 16 ss., comp. with 2 Sam. vii. 18. ss.): "Who am I, Jehovah Elohim, and what is my house, that thou hast brought me hither. And this was even little in thine eyes, Elohim.—Jehovah, for thy servant's sake, and according to thine own heart, hast thou done all this greatness. Jehovah, there is none like thee, and there is not Elohim beside thee. And now Jehovah thou art Haelohim." In these last words David explains why he addresses God as Jehovah. What Jehovah had done was so great that it could not be attributed to a limited national God, and therefore he ascribes it to a God, in whom the highest, the most personal living individuality is combined with the largest infinitude. It afforded the matter of fact proof, that the God of Israel was at the same time the Godhead, since he concentrated in himself whatever existed anywhere of divine."

Partial representations of Jehovah, a tendency to overlook the absolute in him, was extremely natural to Israel, as polytheism prevailed all around, and it was a very bold, a prodigious idea, to ascribe nothing to the gods of the neighbouring and sometimes far more powerful nations

every thing to their own God. If we transport ourselves into the relations of those times we shall find it very natural, that even in the earliest records of revelation the Elohim beside Jehovah, and as a safeguard against confined notions of him, should play an important part.

That in the Elohim-Psalms the Elohim was equal to Jehovah Elohim, the Jehovah being regarded as the invisible accompaniment of Elohim, was recognized by the author of the doxologies at the end of the books. He puts at the close of the second book, which contains the Elohim-Psalms, not Blessed be Elohim, but Blessed be Jehovah Elohim. To the same also points the circumstance, that Jehovah or Jah is commonly even the visible accompaniment of Elohim, and in the larger half of the Elohim-Psalms is once at least expressly named with unmistakeable intention, while in the Jehovah Psalms the Elohim scarcely ever occurs.

The introduction of Elohim in the Elohim-Psalms proceeds from no imperative necessity. For, in the name Jehovah is contained the import, which Elohim only brings expressly and prominently out. Elsewhere Jehovah is not unfrequently found in a like connection. Indeed, the Elohim-Psalms might have been carried, without any exception, through the entire Psalmody. But it is likewise certain that the Elohim in the Elohim-Psalms is everywhere used with consideration. It only occurs where the occasion renders it proper to express the absolute in Jehovah.

The Elohim is a soothing balsam, which was dropt into the wound of the despondency of the people of God in the presence of the world. It was a shield held up against the assaults of despair in times of trouble, raised by the honourers of the so-called Elohim, who railed at the poor Jehovah of Israel. In this way is the Elohim in Ps. xliv. explained. In Ps. lx. Elohim is the battle-cry in the expedition against Edom. At every encroachment upon its boundaries Israel must be awakened anew to the consciousness that Jehovah is God Elohim.

But in the pressing emergencies also occasioned by domestic enemies the soul flies to Elohim. When all on earth is leagued against it, when the waters rise "even to the soul," it finds in this name a sure guerdon for deliverance, which represents its God as the one in whom the whole fulness of Godhead dwells, to whom therefore nothing is impossible, who is rich in resources. Thus David, in Ps. lii., sets Elohim over against Saul, the hero, who was employing all instruments of evil for his destruction, and, in like manner, in a series of other Psalms belonging to the same period of persecution, Ps. liv.-lix. During Absolom's revolt, also, David retreats for refuge to Elohim, in Ps. xlii, xliii. (where the sons of Korah speak as from his soul), Ps. lxi.-

lxiii. To this, too, betakes the suffering righteous one in Ps. lxix.-lxxi.

The Elohim, further, is used in connection with instructive facts, which shew that Jehovah is God, in such Psalms as celebrate the victory which Israel, the weak and little, the "worm Israel," obtained over the heathen world, proudly boasting of their might. Thus in Ps. xlvi. 10, where in ver. 7 and 11 Jehovah Zebaoth corresponds to the (Jehovah) Elohim: Ps. xlvii., where to the Elohim is added: "the Most High, a great King over all the earth;" Ps. xlviii., where also comp. the Zebaoth in ver. 8; Ps. lxviii.

The Elohim stands likewise in Psalms which unfold the idea of the future supremacy of the God of Israel, the pledge of which was the fact that Jehovah is Elohim, Ps. xlv., lxvii., lxviii., lxxii.

Ps. lxv. praises God as the God of the whole world and nature; to the Elohim correspond the words: "Thou art the confidence of all the ends of the earth, and of the sea of the far off." In Ps. li. David makes his complaint to Elohim, because, being plunged into the great deep of sinful conviction, he stood in need of the entire fulness of the divine compassion. The expression: "according to the greatness of thy mercy," forms a sort of commentary on the Elohim.—In Ps. l. the name Elohim is proclaimed with a voice of thunder to those who, after the manner of servants of *a* God, imagined that they could feed their God with their pitiful sacrifices—not reflecting that they had to do with the Lord of the whole world. To the Elohim corresponds the allusion to the sovereignty of God and his spiritual nature, in ver. 9-13.

This indication of the internal grounds, which have given occasion to the use of Elohim, suffices also for a refutation of the strange hypothesis of Ewald, already disposed of by Delitzsch, p. 21, who attributes the predominance of the Elohim to the hand of the collector.

That the Elohim-Psalms possess in general a more elevated character than the Jehovah-Psalms, admits of an easy explanation, from what has already been remarked. It is a consequence of this character, that the Selah should be of more frequent occurrence in them (according to Delitzsch's calculation, it occurs in the first book seventeen times, in the second, thirty times, and twenty times in the third), and it further results, that the announcement of the historical occasion, in the superscription, should be more common in them, or the reference to it in the Psalms themselves. This use of the Elohim sprung up at a time when the honouring of Jehovah in Israel was quite predominant. When latterly the honouring of the so-called Elohim also began to prevail among the Israelites, the Elohim, which was used in a bad sense by them, was forbidden to the true fearers of God. It was retained only

in the school of David's singers, who everywhere copy the example of David's time. The necessity, which gave rise to the use of Elohim, was met in another manner.

The arrangement, then, is as follows:—The first book, Ps. i. to xli., contains the Davidic Jehovah-Psalms; the second, Ps. xlii.-lxxii., the Elohim-Psalms of the singers of David—of the sons of Korah, Ps. xlii.-xlix., of Asaph, Ps. l.; then *his* Elohim-Psalms, Ps. li.-lxxi., and an Elohim-Psalm of his son Solomon, Ps. lxxii.; the third, the Jehovah-Psalms of his singers, of Asaph, Ps. lxxiii.-lxxxiii., of the sons of Korah, Ps. lxxxiv.-lxxxix.

The collector might have made the Elohim-Psalms of David follow his Jehovah-Psalms, then the Jehovah-Psalms of the singers of David, and then, again, their Elohim-Psalms. But in that case, the Elohim-Psalms would not have been enclosed on both sides by the Jehovah-Psalms, while still it was of importance that this should be the case, so that the truth might stand prominently out, that Jehovah is the fundamental name, and everywhere the invisible attendant of Elohim, which only gave distinct prominence to one important idea in the nature of Jehovah. The collector was here guided by the same reasons which determined him in the doxology of the only Elohim-Psalm contained in the second book, not to put: Let Elohim be praised, but: Let Jehovah Elohim be praised. Or, again, the collector might have made the Elohim-Psalms of David follow his Jehovah-Psalms, then the Elohim-Psalms of his singers, and finally the Jehovah-Psalms of his singers. In that case, too, the Psalms of David, and those of his singers, would have stood each by themselves. But then, the distinction of Jehovah and of Elohim-Psalms would not have come so broadly out. It is precisely the existing arrangement, the separation of the Davidic Jehovah, from the Davidic Elohim-Psalms, and likewise the separation of the Jehovah and the Elohim-Psalms of Asaph and the sons of Korah, which sets the device clearly before the reader's eye, and calls upon him to investigate the principle of the collector.

The principle, indeed, has been expressed by the collector himself in the doxologies of the three first books. In the first book, the doxology begins with: "Let Jehovah be praised;" in the second book, with: "Let Jehovah Elohim be praised;" and in the third, with: "Let Jehovah be praised." Delitzsch, who was the first to point out the bearing of the first two doxologies on the subject under consideration, did not perceive that the third presents as good a proof that the third book, according to the view of the collector, contains only Jehovah-Psalms, as the second, that *it* contains only Elohim-Psalms.

There are three objections that may present themselves against the

above view of the arrangement of Ps. i.-lxxxix. The first is this, that in Ps. lxxiii.-lxxxiii.,[a] the Elohim so frequently occurs, that one might even feel tempted to include these in the Elohim-Psalms. But, considered even in an external point of view, this could not be immediately done. Including Ps. lxxxiv., with Delitzsch, who adopts this view, Jehovah and Jah are found twenty-two times in these twelve Psalms while in the thirty-one Psalms of the second book, they occur only thirty-two times, and among the thirty-one Psalms of the second book, there are not less than sixteen in which Jehovah is entirely awanting, while in those twelve it fails only in a single one.

It is also from the first improbable, that as the first book contains only Jehovah-Psalms, the second only Elohim-Psalms, the third should be formed of both. The collector would, in this way, have destroyed his own principle.—If we regard Ps. lxxiii.-lxxxiii. as Elohim-Psalms, then Asaph must have composed Psalms only of that description. This is in itself improbable, apart altogether from the circumstance, that then Ps. l. would not have been separated from the others. The Elohim indicates a particular idea in the nature of the God of Israel, and it could scarcely occur to an Israelitish bard to elevate it to sole supremacy. Only when found as an accompaniment of Jehovah is it in its proper place.

If we look more closely to the Psalms in question, the result discovers itself, that their Elohistic character rests merely upon appearance, and that persons come to maintain its reality only because they forget, in their enumerations of the names of God, the import and meaning of them. The Jehovah-Psalms of Asaph have this distinguishing peculiarity about them, that the glory of the name of Jehovah is an internal, and not a merely external one, a concealed, and not a manifest one; but on that very account so much the more essential.

In Ps. lxxiii. the whole runs out with such emphasis in the names: the Lord Jehovah, that the unaccented preceding threefold Elohim does not come into notice; it has only the character of an antechamber. Also in Ps. lxxiv. 18, the Jehovah, on which a special emphasis rests, and for which Elohim cannot be substituted, should be written in large capitals, while the Elohim before it, though occurring four times, falls into the background. In Ps. lxxv. the double Elohim stands only as stepping stones to the simple Jehovah in ver. 9. The cover, which till then lay on the face of God, is taken away at the end, and it beams forth in all its glory. Precisely the same is true of Ps. lxxvi.; there too the Jehovah, which should be written large, forms the conclusion. In Ps. lxxvii. the precious name is found exactly in the words which form the

[a] Nobody will go along with Delitzsch, Symbolae, p. 22, in regarding Ps. lxxxiv. as an Elohim-Psalm, see Introd, to that Psalm.

beating heart of the Psalm, "I will declare the deeds of Jah," in ver. 11; and the one Jah in this passage, more emphatical than Jehovah (see on Ps. lxviii. 4, lxxxix. 8), weighs more than the six Elohims which serve only to make it shine forth the more brightly. In Ps. lxxviii. Jehovah occurs, indeed, only twice, while Elohim is used eight times; but Jehovah stands at the head, and in the announcement of the theme in ver. 41, "the wonders of the Lord," are the centre of the following representation; so that Jehovah is the constant though invisible accompaniment of the succeeding Elohims. Then it recurs again in a very emphatic connection in ver. 21. In Ps. lxxix. Elohim is used in the representation given of the poor suppliant. But in the prayer he rises immediately to Jehovah, and with him alone has he to do through the whole Psalm, from ver. 5. That in Ps. lxxx. Jehovah has really the supreme place, though it occurs only twice, while Elohim is used five times, is evident from what has been already remarked in the Introd. to the Psalm. In Ps. lxxxi. Jehovah is the prevailing name even externally. Ps. lxxxii., in which Jehovah is altogether awanting, and Elohim, which *must* stand there (see on ver. 2) occurs twice, seems to have been considered by the collector as a prelude and introduction to Ps. lxxxiii. (the conclusion of both Psalms is to be compared) which also indeed has Elohim only once, but runs out into a double Jehovah.

Through the whole, therefore, Jehovah has the *primas partes*, and Elohim is thrown by it into the shade. The Elohim also in these Psalms is essentially different from that in the Elohim Psalms. Here it is everywhere the more general, less pregnant, lower name of God; whereas in the properly Elohim-Psalms, it is used with great emphasis, inasmuch as it is the idea of the absolute in Jehovah which it expresses, and opposes that abuse of the name, which overlooked this idea, so that relatively it becomes the higher name.

A second consideration suggests itself in the fact, that in the midst of the Psalms of David and of his singers, certain nameless Psalms are inserted, which seems inexplicable, if the collector was guided by the principle indicated above. But it is found on nearer examination, that with the solitary exception of Ps. i. and ii., the namelessness is only apparent. It occurs only in regard to such Psalms as are united with the preceding into one whole, so that the naming of the author in these communicates itself to the others. Thus Ps. x. stands connected with Ps. ix., Ps. xxxiii. is formed into a pair with Ps. xxxiv. From these analogies we are already inclined to the supposition, that Ps. lxvi. and lxvii., to which the name of David is not prefixed, form with Ps. lxv. a triology; so that its superscription extends also to them. And this supposition is favoured by the לַמְנַצֵּחַ at the head of both, which else-

where never occurs but in the songs of David, of Asaph and the sons of Korah—by the שִׁיר, song of praise, which the whole three have in common—and by the contents of the Psalms; they contain a treasury of praise to God, divided into three parts—two Psalms, which magnify the benefits of God in natural things to his church, inclose a third which celebrates his praise on account of historical benefits. This view is little affected by the fact, to which too much importance was attached in the Introd. to Ps. lxvi., that the words, "Come, behold the works of the Lord," in ver. 5, appear to have been literally borrowed from Ps. xlvi. 8; the relation is rather the reverse. Ps. lxxi. forms a pair with Ps. lxx.; as likewise Ps. xliii. with Ps. xlii. There remain only Ps. i. and ii. That this pair stands without any superscription, is perhaps to be explained on the ground, that it originally served as an introduction to a collection of sacred songs collected by David himself, which, besides *his* songs, contained those also of his chief musicians. The introductory character must have appeared less, if they had borne the name of David. Standing without superscription at the head of an entire collection, all the parts of which had superscriptions, they presently gave themselves to be understood to be an introduction. Our collectors, who only produced what they found, did not venture to affix to them a superscription. The Davidic origin was also sufficiently indicated by their position at the head of the Davidic Jehovah-Psalms.

A third consideration presents itself in the circumstance, that in the midst of the Korahite-Elohim-Psalms, in Ps. lxxxvi. David is named as the author, as also in the naming of Heman and Ethan in Ps. lxxxviii. and lxxxix. But this objection has already been obviated by the remarks made on those Psalms.

Regarding it, then, as settled, that viewed generally and collectively the Psalms of David and his singers were arranged according to the distinctive use of the names of God, a further question arises, after what principles did the collectors within these limits assign to particular Psalms their place? The answer is, they put those Psalms in juxtaposition which had some bond connecting them together, and sought to present in each particular group a kind of Psalmodic chain, the links of which ran into each other. I. They always joined together the pairs of Psalms, or rather they did not separate what had from the first been internally united. Such pairs of Psalms are i., ii.; ix., x.; xx., xxi., xxiii., xxiv.; xxv., xxvi.; xxviii., xxix.; xxxii., xxxiii.; xlii., xliii.; lxx., lxxi.; lxxxviii., lxxxix. They likewise left the larger group of Psalms, Ps. lxv.-lxviii., united together. In this the trilogy, formerly referred to, Ps. lxv.-lxvii., forms the introduction to Ps. lxviii., the solemn Te Deum, which was sung in the temple after a great victory had been

obtained. All the four Psalms have, as a proof of their original connection, the character of praise-songs, and the שִׁיר מִזְמוֹר in the superscriptions is common. The idea, that what the Lord had done for Israel, would exercise a powerful influence upon the heathen, connects Ps. lxviii. with the two preceding ones. Ps. lxv. 5-7 already contains in it the kernel of Ps. lxvi., lxviii. Comp. besides Ps. lxv. 1: "and to thee one pays vows," with Ps. lxvi. 13: "and to thee will I pay my vows;" the conclusion of Ps. lxv.: "they shout and they sing," with the beginning of Ps. lxvi.: "shout to God all lands;" then the resembling conclusions of Ps. lxvi., lxvii., lxviii. II. They place together Psalms which were united together by a similar occasion. Thus Ps. xlvii. and xlviii. stand beside each other, because they both refer to the deliverance of Jehosaphat, the first for being sung in the Valley of Thanksgiving, the second at the solemn service in the temple. In like manner Ps. lxxv. and lxxvi. the two Jehovah-Psalms of Asaph, stand together, which refer to the Assyrian oppression, the first sung in prospect of the catastrophe, the second after its accomplishment. But here we must be content to remain with the similarity of the occasion. That the collectors were not guided by a strictly chronological respect is evident alone from the fact, that among the Korahite Elohim Psalms, Ps. xlvi., which refers to the Assyrian catastrophe, precedes Ps. xlvii. and xlviii., which belong to the time of Jehosaphat. III. They joined together those which have a common superscription. Thus the whole Korahite Elohim Psalms stand together which bear the name מַשְׂכִּיל, instruction, Ps. xlii., xliii., xliv., xlv. On this ground also it is clear that Ps. xliii. is combined into a pair with Ps. xlii., otherwise it would not have stood here. So also with Ps. lii.-lv., the whole Elohim-Psalms of David, which possess the superscription לְדָוִד מַשְׂכִּיל, an instruction of David. Then the Davidic Elohim-Psalms, which have in the superscription מִכְתָּם, secret, Ps. lvi.-lx. Among these, again, those which have besides the אַל תַּשְׁחֵת, destroy not, in common, Ps. lvii.-lix. all the three belonging to the Sauline period, of like matter and like character, and by David himself destined to go together. IV. A coincidence in the thoughts has also in many ways influenced the arrangement. Thus Ps. iii. and iv. follow Ps. ii., because they represent the personal experiences and feelings of David, on which as its foundation the prophetic representation in Ps. ii. is raised. Ps. v. connects itself as a morning prayer with the evening prayers in Ps. iii. and iv. A respect to the ideas has also led to the juxtaposition of Ps. xiv. and xv.—See the Introd. to the former. Ps. xxxiv. and xxxv. have been placed together on account of the mention in both Psalms of the angel of the Lord. Ps. li., the first

Davidic Elohim-Psalm, follows the Elohim-Psalm of Asaph, Ps. l., because both agree in the worthlessness of sacrifices, in which the heart is not. V. Much more common, however, than such internal relationships is the juxtaposition made to rest upon particular expressions or images common to the united Psalms. Thus Ps. lxxvii. and lxxviii., which otherwise have nothing to do with each other, have been placed next each other on account of the comparison of Israel with a flock made at the close of both. Ps. vi. has only the mention of evil-doers in common with Ps. v.; Ps. v. 5, vi. 8. As this ground of connection lies upon the borders of accident, and is only the collector's last make-shift in striving after an arrangement, we shall not attempt by an exposition of particular Psalms to point it out in individual cases, and must refer those who feel interested in the matter to the Symbolae of Delitzsch, whose induction of proofs has at least established the result "that it cannot be concluded from the mere juxtaposition of two or more Psalms, and their resemblance to each other, that they were written by the same author, which conclusion has been very frequently urged by Hitzig." Another conclusion of Delitzsch, that one must be very cautious in the admission of pairs of Psalms, the author believes that he, at least, has no occasion to bring into consideration. He has never rested the admission of such pairs upon merely external points; but simply regards the fact of the existence of nameless Psalms in the midst of those, whose authors are all designated, as providing for them a strong ground of support.

One thing, however, is manifest from all that has been established regarding the arrangement in the three first books, that we find ourselves here everywhere on the territory of design, contrivance, and reflection, and that, therefore, all hypotheses must be rejected, which proceed on the supposition, that the collectors gave free scope to accident, indolence, and carelessness.

This remark conducts us to the last point, which still remains to be noticed in regard to the three first books—the words כלו תפלות דוד בן־ישי at an end are the prayer-songs of David, the son of Jesse, which are found at the close of the second book, and follow the doxology of it appended to Ps. lxxii. This formal announcement cannot, as Delitzsch has supposed, be the conclusion of an original collection, which contained the Psalms of David and his singers, and which the authors of our present collection still retained, though they introduced afterwards a number of Psalms of later date. For, 1. It presupposes a great carelessness on the part of the later collectors, since after the enlargement of the original collection, in which an entire series of later Psalms appears bearing the name of David, they had not expunged a completely unsuitable conclusion. Such a thoughtlessness is absolutely

without analogy in the canon of Scripture, and is the less to be credited in regard to the collection of the Psalms, as this everywhere manifests plan, intention, and care. 2. It is supposed without reason, that under the name of the Psalms of David (which here a *potiori* are designated by the appellation of prayer-songs, because there was no general Hebrew name for the Psalms) those also of his singers are comprehended. The passages, Ezra iii. 10, 2 Chron. xxiii. 18, which are adduced in support of this, cannot prove it. Such a naming, which otherwise had even already been unjustifiable, was the less proper to be adopted, after the older collection had been still farther enlarged by the late additions; so that the slender ground then gave way on which Delitzsch seeks to justify the ascription of the Psalms of David's singers to David himself —viz., "That they were such as, whether written by David or his contemporaries, had been publicly sanctioned by the authority of David." 3. This announcement stands at the close of the doxology of the second book. Now, if the doxologies belong to those who formed our present collection in five books (see Delitzsch, p. 19) then this announcement also must be referred to them. Otherwise, it would certainly have stood before the doxology. 4. Of David's singers we have only up to Ps. lxxii., the Elohim-Psalms. But this is as good as an express intimation, that we might still expect from them the Jehovah-Psalms. Or, could the older collector have given merely the Elohim-Psalms known to belong to them?* 5. That in Ps. i.-lxxii., there are found only Psalms of David and his singers, is an indication that others might be expected from different authors. Or, could the author of the original collection have known only these, and been ignorant especially of the Psalm of Moses, the man of God? 6. Among the Psalms of David in the two last books there are some of such distinguished import, that they could not possibly be unknown to those who formed the original collection. How deep the Davidic Psalms in particular of the two last books had penetrated into the life of the community, appears from this,

* Several, and recently V. Longerke, have sought to raise Ps. iii.–xli. to the rank of an original collection, to which was afterwards added as a second part, Ps. xlii.–lxxii. This hypothesis vanishes before the single consideration that Ps. i.–xli., as it only contains Psalms of David, from which no collector would certainly have separated those of his singers, so closely connected with him, 2 Chron. xxix. 30, so it contains merely the Jehovah-Psalms of David. These could only have been associated together by the same person, who afterwards subjoined the Elohim-Psalms of David. And as this person at the same time communicated the Elohim-Psalms of David, he must again be identical with the collector of the third book. The reason for the making up of the Psalter from different collections, because Ps. liii. could not have been admitted by the same person who received Ps. xiv., and in like manner Ps. lxx., as compared with Ps. xl. Ps. cviii. with Ps. lvii., lx., is disposed of by the remarks formerly made upon those Psalms.

that they were raised at a later period to become the centre of a series of cycles of Psalms. But it is in itself an improbable supposition, and one incapable of proof, that collections of the Psalms of David existed of different compass. Every thing that proceeded from David on that very account drew upon it the general attention, and just as little as part of his compositions could remain unknown, as little would any one have taken upon him to select only that which accorded with his own private taste. What bore upon it the name of David was thereby stamped as good, as edifying, as a sacred treasure. The man who was placed on high, the anointed of the God of Jacob, lovely in the Psalms of Israel, he, through whom the Spirit of the Lord spake, and had *his* words upon his tongue, 2 Sam. xxiii. 12, was elevated far above either forgetfulness or criticism. 7. There is an utter want of analogies for marking by an express and formal conclusion an end, which of itself might be discerned to be such. The canon is free from any such loquacity as this. Therefore, the announcement: at an end are the prayer-songs of David, carries with it an intimation, that other Psalms besides were to follow. Nay, still more, it would have been superfluous, if Psalms had not been to follow, which bore on their front the name of David. To this, indeed, it must point, bearing the character of an enigma, that these additional Psalms stood in other relations than those given in the two first books.

We shall reach perfect clearness and certainty by perceiving that all the Psalms of David in the two last books are inserted as component parts into the later cycles. The subscription at the end of the sacred book must have been designed to separate the free and the bound, the scattered and the serial Psalms of David, from each other. Analagous in some measure is the subscription: at an end are the speeches of Job, in Job xxxi. 40, which is not contradicted by the fact, that Job appears again speaking, in ch. xl. and xlii.; it should rather be regarded as serving to give us a right understanding of that formal conclusion.

Turning now to the last two books of the collection, we remark at the outset, that in them the chronological principle of the arrangement strongly predominates. At the head stands "the prayer of Moses, the man of God," Ps. xc. Then follows Ps. xci.-c., a decalogue of Psalms very closely related to each other, sung in prospect of the Babylonian catastrophe—see Introd. on Ps. xciv. The great chasm between Ps. xc. and Ps. xci.-c. is explained by this, that the collector wished to place in the front the productions of David, the man who had been placed on high, &c., who was fitly regarded as the proper author of this branch of literature, and of those who had been stirred up by him and their schools. Into this chasm fall, with few exceptions, (the

Psalms of the exile by Asaph and the sons of Korah, see the section on the authors of the Psalms) all the Psalms of the first three books. It is only about the times of the exile that the Psalmodic poetry works itself free from this connection with the schools of David's singers. The author of Ps. xci.-c. was the first who, without being a member of their body, received the gift of sacred song; after the exile, Asaph and the sons of Korah are no more to be thought of.—Then follows in Ps. ci.-cvii., a heptad, consisting of a trilogy of David, with which a bard of the time of the exile associated some new ones, and a seventh added by another bard after the return from exile.—See Introd. to Ps. cvii. As the collector in the arrangement of the Psalms from xc. follows the chronological principle, so he determines here by the same principle the division of the books. Though Ps. cvii. forms a component part of the heptad, yet the fourth book, which was made to contain the Psalms from Moses to the Babylonish captivity, not composed by David and his singers, or their schools, is closed by Ps. cvi., the doxological conclusion of which was at the same time intended by the collector as a formal conclusion to the book,—comp. on Ps. cvi. 48.—A dodecade of Ps. cviii.-cxix., introduced, like the preceding cycle, by a trilogy of David, to which were then added nine later Psalms, contains those Psalms which were sung on the occasion of laying the foundation of the new temple—see Introd. to Ps. cxviii.—In Ps. cxx.-cxxxiv., the pilgrim's little book, consisting of four Psalms of David, one of Solomon, and ten without names, we have the productions that belong to the time of the interrupted temple-building.—In Ps. cxxxv.-cxlvi., there is a group of twelve Psalms sung after the happy completion of the temple, and probably at the consecration of it—three nameless Psalms at the beginning, and one at the end, in the middle of Psalms of David.—The closing portion is composed of Ps. cxlvii.-cl., four Psalms, which were sung at the consecration of the city walls under Nehemiah.

The completion of the Psalmody could not have been made before the consecration of the walls under Nehemiah, to which the last Psalms refer. But neither can we bring it down to a later period—partly on account of the history of the canon, which was terminated in the time of Ezrah and Nehemiah, partly on account of the character of Psalm cl., which was manifestly intended to form a full-toned close to the whole.* To the same period the collection of the Psalms is ascribed by tradition—although this by itself would not be entitled to much

* Without foundation some have sought to find a conclusive proof of the completion of the present Book of Psalms in 1 Chron. xvi. 36; comp., on the contrary, p. 285 of this volume, where it has made appear that Delitzsch has incorrectly argued from this passage for the antiquity of the division of the Psalms into five books.

weight. In 2 Macc. ii. 13, the collection of the productions of David is ascribed to Nehemiah. Jerome, epist. ad Sophronium, and the synopsis found among the works of Athanasius, ascribe the collection to Ezra (comp. Stark, carm. Dav. i. p. 425, 6.) Meanwhile, there are reasons which render it probable that the collection of the Psalms was only completed then, and had been begun at an earlier period. Of special significance is it here, that in the last group of Psalms there is not found, as in all the cycles since the exile, a trunk of Davidic Psalms, out of which the shoot of the new song might spring up. This seems to indicate, that then the Davidic Psalms had been already all disposed of in the collection. Further, the last group, Ps. cxlvii.-cl., connects itself with the close of the immediately preceding one, just as Ps. cxxxv. commencing the group, Ps. cxxxv.-cxlvi. intentionally connects itself with the last Psalm of the Pilgrim Book, Ps. cxxxiv.; so that the collection must already have been increased up to that point. Accordingly, the forming of the collection might be set down, for the time of the completion of the second temple. For, that we must not ascend higher is evident from the circumstance, that, with respect to the enrolment in the cycle of the Psalms, which were for being sung at the consecration of the temple, the eight Davidic Psalms were not received among the Psalms of David, but were purposely thrown back. That the collection of the Psalms stands in a close connection with the finishing of the temple, is clear as day. Finally, that the existing collection was only completed, and shut up in the time of Ezra and Nehemiah, may still farther be presumed from the fifth book wanting the doxology at the close, which is found at the first four books, and which would not have been wanting here, too, if the same collector had brought the work to a final termination. But this fact admits also of another explanation. The close of the last book did not require to be expressly indicated, as it was sufficiently evident of itself, and a doxology was here the less necessary, as the whole of the last Psalm bears the character of a high-sounding doxology.

In regard to the numbering of the Psalms, there is a diversity, yet so that the entire number of them, 150, which certainly was not accidental, but was intentionally made up by the last composer of Psalms, remains uninjured. The LXX., and the translations which follow it, in particular the Vulgate, connect together Ps. ix. x., then cxiv. and cxv., but separate Ps. cxvi. 1-9 from 10-19, Ps. cxlvii. 1-11 from ver. 12-20. The last division especially was made on purpose to secure the number 150, which must, therefore, at the time of the LXX., have been regarded as indispensable. This diversity must be remembered, on this account more particularly, that learned men among the Catholics for the most

part cite by the Vulgate. They commonly are one Psalm behind the Hebrew original in their citations; for example, they cite Ps. xxii. as Ps. xxi.

VII. ON THE DOCTRINAL MATTER OF THE PSALMS.

The Book of Psalms is full of the noblest testimonies to the being of God, and his perfections. It has contributed, in this respect, vast materials for developing the consciousness of mankind, and the Christian church rests far more upon them for its apprehensions of God than might at first sight be supposed. To perceive to what an extent this is the case, we have only to search out the traces of the Psalms in our liturgies and church-songs. Even the French Deists, the theo-philanthropists, sworn enemies of the Bible, could only make out their liturgy by the help of the Psalms. This is one chief reason why the Psalter is so precious to the afflicted. It presents God so clearly and vividly before their eyes, that they see him, in a manner, with their bodily sight, and find thereby the sting taken from their pains. In this, too, lies one great element of the importance of the Psalter for the present times. What men now most of all need is, that the blanched image of God should again be freshened up in them. This, not the denial of particular tenets of revelation, which is only a consequence of the other, and which can never be thoroughly eradicated so long as the fundamental evil remains, is the deepest grief of the church, and one which believers will still have to bear with. Those who would strive to effect, in this respect, a reformation in themselves or others, will find in the Psalms a mighty help. The more closely we connect ourselves with them, the more will God cease to be to us a shadowy form, which can neither hear, nor help, nor judge us, and to which we can present no supplication.

Among the heathen, every divine perfection has its contrast (see Nägelsbach, Homer. Theol. p. 13.) Here every thing is of one piece and mould. From the calls, indeed, which we so often meet with in these writers of inspired song, upon God to hear, to see, to think of them, not to forget, and their complaints, that he does not hear, &c., the accusation has often been brought against them, of rough and childish representations of God's omniscience, omnipresence, and superintending providence. But we have only to look somewhat deeper in order to discover the agreement that exists between these passages

and others which contain the most elevated representations of God's omnipresent being and providential agency. In the latter, the voice of the Spirit makes itself heard; in the former, that of the flesh. The radical character of the Psalms is feeling. This is uttered in faithfulness and truth before God, as it arose in the heart of the singers, and it is precisely through this that they exercise so strong an influence. We are drawn to them in the first instance by finding our own weakness, our own fainting under tribulation repeating itself, and then suffer ourselves to be gently conducted by them to the strength of God. The *feeling*, however, in weak man is often very different from the *conviction*. He may be firmly convinced of God's providence, may be ready to defend it with vigour against all who assail it, and yet if tribulation befal him, if God withdraw from him the tokens of his favour, it then comes to be in the feelings of his soul, as if God knew nothing of him, as if he concerned himself not at all in the conflict of joy and sorrow, as if there were an impassable gulf fixed between heaven and earth. In this contest faith must be strengthened. It exists in the godly of the New, not less than in those of the Old Covenant, and that superficiality and strangeness to spiritual experience, which accuses David and other sacred bards of having had rough ideas of God's ever present and watchful providence, may with equal propriety be brought against a Luther and Paul Gerhard, and against all our religious poets and men of devotion. How along with that voice of the flesh in the Psalms there was perpetually raised also the voice of the spirit, appears even from the single fact, that the writers pour out their supplications before the very God who hears and sees and regards not.

The mystery of the Trinity is not yet plainly declared in the Psalms. This doctrine belongs, as to its distinct form, to the times of the New Testament. It presupposes historical developments, which could then only come into being. The fuller understanding of it and its blessed practical operation rests upon the incarnation of the Word. Its too early manifestation would have been attended with the worse consequences, as Israel was surrounded on every hand by heathen neighbours and was itself inclined to polytheism. Under the Old Covenant it was of importance primarily to lay stress upon the unity of God, and with proper apprehensions of this to enforce and impress the minds of the people, so that they might courageously maintain it against all the formidable assaults of the spirit of the then world and age. By this means the best foundation was laid for the doctrine of the Trinity. Still, however, we find here, as in the case of all the doctrines, the full revelation of which was reserved for the New Testament, the germ and point of connection for the New Testament dogma. How even the divine name

Elohim is to be viewed in this light, since it indicates that the unity of God is not one of poverty, but of richness and fulness, has already been pointed out in Th. ii. of my Beitr. In unison with Gen. i. 2, the Spirit of God, whose personality was certainly not yet recognized, appears as the source of all physical life, Ps. civ. 30, as penetrating and filling all things, Ps. cxxxix. 7, as the creative principle that made the world, Ps. xxxiii. 6, as the administrative power and presence of God in Israel, Ps. cvi. 33, finally, as the source of all moral life, Ps. li. 12, cxliii. 10. But the most direct indication of the doctrine of the Trinity is to be found in those passages which contain a reference to the superhuman nature of the Messiah,—passages on which we must the less think of forcing another meaning, as in the prophets (for example, in Isa. ix., where even Hitzig is obliged to recognise it), there is found something unquestionably similar. Such indications pervade all the Messianic Psalms; and quite naturally. For, the more deeply the knowledge of human sinfulness, impotence, and nothingness sunk in Israel (comp. for example Ps. ciii. 14-16), the less could men remain satisfied with the thoughts of a merely human redeemer, who, according to the Israelitish manner of contemplation, could do extremely little. A human king (and all the strictly Messianic Psalms have to do with Messias as king), even of the most glorious description, could never accomplish what the idea of the kingdom of God imperiously required, and what had been promised even in the first announcements respecting the Messiah, viz., the bringing of the nations into obedience, blessing all the families of the earth, and acquiring the sovereignty of the world. In Ps. ii. 12 the Messiah is presented as simpliciter the Son of God, as he in whom confidence brings salvation, whose wrath is perdition. In Ps. xlv. 6-7 he is named God, Elohim. In Ps. lxxii. 5, 7, 17, eternity of dominion is ascribed to him. In Ps. cx. 1 he at last appears as the Lord of the community of saints and of David himself, sitting at the right hand of the Almighty, and installed in the full enjoyment of divine authority over heaven and earth.

We turn now to the doctrine of angels. This doctrine, which is so adverse to the friends of a mere earthly religion, belongs to the first foundations of true religion. Already in Genesis do we meet with angels, first in the history of Abraham, then of Jacob. There was a danger, however, in this doctrine of angels to monotheism, as the temptation might very naturally arise of ascribing to them, from solemn awe respecting the almighty and holy God, a portion of the glory due only to him, and of seeking through them to obtain the favour and blessing of God. But this danger was met by throwing their personality quite into the shade, and making them appear only as the instruments and servants of God. All speculations, too, were cut off respecting their na-

ture and their origin by passing over these topics in profound silence. How narrow the limits are within which the doctrine of angels is confined in Scripture, how strictly the practical bearing of the matter is adhered to, is manifest alone from the name usually given to them, *messengers*, which points, not to the nature, but to the office. The Psalms, also, while they not rarely make mention of the angels, keep scrupulously within the limits observed by the earlier revelation, so much so, that in several places we might feel tempted to suppose a personification, if other passages did not forbid the supposition, in particular Ps. ciii. 20, where the angels appear as conscious instruments of God, who do free and loving service to him. Besides that name they also receive in the Psalms the appellation of sons of God, Ps. xxix. 1, 2, lxxxix. 7, as being the most glorious amongst God's creatures, and those that stand nearest to himself; that also of the holy ones = the dignities, in Ps. lxxxix. 7. They are presented to us as patterns in respect to the adoration of God, whose glory commends itself to our regard, through their ascriptions of praise, Ps. xxix. 1, 2, lxxxix. 6, 7, ciii. 20. Their watchfulness and support are for us the source of consolation, Ps. xci. 11, 12, where, however, there is nothing said of guardian angels to individual persons, a doctrine which has no place in Sacred Scripture. On the evil they bring as God's servants, destruction, Ps. lxxviii. 49, so that the disproportionate superiority as to strength on the part of the wicked need not terrify the righteous, for behind it the spiritual eye discerns the innumerable host of the Almighty, and his "strong heroes," Ps. ciii. 20. The two passages, Ps. xxxiv. 7, xxxv. 5, 6, shew, that the Psalmists were also acquainted with the doctrine, which pervades the whole of the Old Testament, and which represents the angel of the Lord as his mediator in all his transactions with the world, and especially with his kingdom and people—a truth which is disclosed in its full import in the prologue to the gospel of John. In the former Psalm the angel of the Lord appears attended by hosts of ministering angels, as the captain of the host of God (Josh. v. 15), as the *protector* of those that fear God, and in the latter as the judge and destroyer of the wicked. The passage Ps. civ. 4, does not refer to the angels.

The doctrine of fallen, bad angels, or more properly spirits, and especially of the head of these, Satan, has a place even in the Pentateuch. That under Asasel, to which, according to Lev. xvi., on the great day of atonement, a goat was sent away laden with the forgiven sins of the people into the wilderness, Satan is to be understood, was proved in my : Egypt and the Books of Moses, and more recently by Kurtz in his work on the Mosaic offerings. On clearer grounds it can also be demonstrated, that Moses, though under a cover, represents Satan, "the mur-

derer from the beginning," as taking an active part in the seduction of the first pair. However, the object there was not so properly to establish this doctrine in the consciousness of the people, as rather to indicate its place. It was above all important, that the one true God should acquire form among his people, and should be vividly recognized as the one and all. Till this was done, there was a danger lest a part of the honour due to him should be transferred to Satan, lest by propitiatory gifts they should seek to be at peace with him, the rather so as Israel had before his eyes the example of the worship paid to the evil God Typhon in Egypt. But the doctrine respecting Satan could not acquire its full significance till it was brought into connection with the doctrine of Christ, nor could it be fully disclosed till the manifestation of the word in the flesh. It need not, therefore, surprise us, that we find no trace of this doctrine in the Psalms. For that the passages, Ps. lxxviii. 49, cix. 6, have been improperly referred to it, has been already shown. We must not from this, however, conclude, that the Psalmists were ignorant of the doctrine, but only that it exercised no important influence upon their spiritual life, and the more so as the silence in question is found in the later, not less than the earlier Psalms, while we know the doctrine had assumed, at the period of their composition, an explicit and regular form, and meets us in a very striking and finished form in the introduction to the Book of Job and in Zechariah.

Next to the doctrine respecting God, there is none to which the Psalms bear more ample testimony than that respecting sin; and the former rests upon the latter. It is only where sin is rightly understood, that the shadows vanish which hinder us from attaining to the right apprehension of God. For then only does there come to be an earnest seeking after God, the one Saviour, which is the necessary condition to finding him. In the deep experience of human sinfulness, the Old Testament religion differed from all heathen religions, whose foul stain it was that they did not endeavour to produce this, but allowed sin to be regarded as a calamity, a fate, whereby the proper notion of sin was destroyed, and the idea of God at the same time annihilated. And this felt apprehension of sin meets us in the Psalms in the liveliest manner. The law and the prophets sought to awaken it; the Psalmists shew us in their own living experience what it was to them. "There seest thou (says Luther) into the heart of all saints as into death, nay as into hell. How dark does it appear, troubled on all hands by the wrath of God."

In regard to the doctrine of the origin of sin, any express reference to it lay quite out of the way of the authors of the Psalms, who only utter the feelings of their hearts, and hence had far more to do with the fact of sinful corruption than with its origin. We find no passage

upon the relation of our sin to the sin of Adam. The fall, which first receives its proper elucidation in consequence of the atonement wrought out by Christ, is never thought of. Still a hereditary, inborn, and, by ordinary generation, propagated corruption, is decidedly maintained. According to Ps. li. 6, 7, the sin of human nature is deeply rooted; man is tainted with poison even in his first origin, and hence incapable of attaining, by his own power, to the true and internal righteousness required by God. In Ps. lviii. 3, the fruitfulness of human corruption is derived from this, that it rests upon original sin, and consequently has its root in the innermost depths of the human heart. The Psalms coincide also in this point with the Pentateuch, according to which the imagination of man's heart is evil from his youth, Gen. viii. 21. But while man brings with him the germ of corruption into the world, the Psalmists are very far from acquitting him of guilt respecting it, and of ascribing it to God—which they could not have done without directly contradicting the doctrine they so clearly unfold of God's holiness and purity. Without investigating how man comes to participate in inherited corruption, they abide merely by the fact of his consciousness, which makes man responsible for his whole sin as guilt. All suffering, even the most severe, appears as deserved punishment for sin, comp. for ex. Ps. xl. 12, xxxviii. 4.

The universality and depth of human corruption is painted in lively colours in Ps. xiv. 1-3. The poison of this has so thoroughly penetrated human nature, that we are even unconsciously led to commit violations of the divine law. The holy singers pray to God that he would pardon even their hidden faults, Ps. xix. 13; and the righteous also stand in need of preservation from great and presumptuous sins, ver. 14. Before God no one is righteous; all need his pardoning mercy, Ps. cxliii. 2, cxxx. 3. Peculiarly important also are Ps. xxxii. and li., as testimonies to the deep sense of sin, in which David outshone all others.

The deepest ground of this characteristic of the Psalms, as of the Old Testament generally, lay in the apprehension of the holiness of God, by the contemplation of which, through the contrast it presented to man himself, he became alive to his own unrighteousness—comp. Isa. vi. In the heathen world, as in the natural conscience generally, there was an utter want of this apprehension of the divine holiness. Their gods were even not free from moral necessity, from the chains of sin and evil. "Heathenism forms a god after man's image, and though we find there the divine personality, and that also regarded as standing high above the human, yet in point of fact it still appears compassed about with all sorts of limitation and defects." (Nägelsbach s. 11.) The difference was further increased by the existence in Israel of a revealed, stern, and unbending

law standing over against the sinner, while the natural law becomes altered to the worse by the inclination. Then the consciousness of sin had from the very earliest existence of the people struck its roots deep among them through the fearful threatenings of law and the actual judgments of God. Finally, it is still farther to be taken into account that, by virtue of the Mosaic law, God was placed in the centre of all relations, so that every sin against one's neighbour became also an offence against him. This manner of considering sin must have put an end to all levity—comp. on Ps. li. 5.

Sin is not kept merely in the territory of the deeds, but also brought into that of the words and thoughts—comp. on Ps. xxiv. 4, lxxiii. 1, 13, cxxv. 4, ci. 5, etc. God proves the *heart*, Ps. xvii. 3. David particularly shews himself to have been deeply penetrated by the conviction that, above all, the heart, with its inclinations, must be brought into conformity with the law of God. The consciousness that nothing could be done by mere human strength in keeping the commandments of God—that God alone could here effect the willing and the doing, as is declared, for example, in Ps. cxix., can belong only to one who apprehends the necessity of the inmost disposition being in harmony with the law. Where this is not the case, the thought will readily spring up, that one can manage without God. Pelagianism always goes hand in hand with a disposition to look at sin in an external point of view.

It has been sought to rob the Psalms of the glorious characteristic now described, or at least to lessen it, by a double accusation. First, it has been alleged that the representation given of sin is often of a grossly external nature—that in a multitude of Psalms the righteous are the Jews as such, sinners the heathen, and especially the Chaldeans, as such. To justify this allegation, a number of Psalms, containing personal lamentations, have been turned, with a discarding of the superscriptions, into national laments, under the remonstrance even of some who, as to the main point, hold the same ground. So says Gesenius, in his preface to Gramberg's History of the Religious ideas of the Old Testament: "that he had abandoned that mode of criticism in regard to the book of Psalms, which transferred the greater part of the poems, especially the plaintive Psalms, if not to the period of the exile, at least to the times of the kings, and ascribed them to the prophets and pious men persecuted by the heathen." By restoring, however, the superscriptions and the internal grounds to their proper place, every suspicion of that coarse external view of sin vanishes at once, in regard to a great number of the Psalms. It becomes manifest that the relation which forms the ground-work of them is a purely moral one—that of

the righteous to the unrighteous, of the god-fearing to the godless. There certainly, however, remain Psalms in which the Israelites are represented as the righteous, the heathen as the wicked, of which examples are to be found also in the prophets—for ex. Hab. i. 13, comp. Delitzsch there. But it is soon perceived that this contrast does not proceed, as in the later and carnally minded period, upon the national relation. It is entirely of the same kind as in the Psalms which refer to domestic relations, so that the determination whether the one or the other has place, is often difficult, often, indeed, absolutely impossible, as the Psalms must refer, according to the intention of the authors, to both relations. Such especially is the case with the whole cycle of the Psalms of David, which refer to the afflictions of the righteous, and have in view at once the relations of the individual and those of the entire people. It is not Israel as to skin and bone, but the invisible community in the visible, which is placed in contrast with the ungodly heathen world—comp. on Ps. ix., and the author's work on Balaam, at Num. xxiii. 10, where Israel has the appellation given to it of the upright. In Ps. lxxii. 1, Israel is more definitely characterised as, "the pure in heart." Coarse externality is rather to be thrown as a reproach upon him, who, incapable of raising himself to the contemplation of the essential being, judges a society merely from its appearance. But how can we think of finding here any such coarse externality among the noblest spirits of a people, in whose first beginnings even the law had made itself felt in all its pungency, and among whom the most fearful threatenings were hurled against the heads of such as turned aside into iniquity. In the Psalms of David it is a fundamental principle, that before God the heart only is accounted of, and that sincere and internal piety is the indispensable condition of salvation—comp. on Ps. xv., xxiv. A pointed distinction in Israel itself, the restriction of salvation to the righteous, the excommunication of the wicked, meets us very frequently in the Psalms—comp., for example, Ps. l., lxxviii., xcv., xcix., cxxv.

The second accusation is the following: The consciousness of sin expressed in the Psalms does not arise from sin itself; it is awakened only by misfortune; forgiveness of sin also is sought not on right grounds, but only in respect to freedom from misfortune, which was regarded as a punishment of sin, from the prevailing error as to visible recompenses. But they who object thus do not consider, that in speaking of men being brought through suffering to the knowledge of sin, it is only meant that this must be employed agreeably to its design—that the human heart is so hard, that vast multitudes are not brought even through this means to repentance, and that God can bring none of his own without it to a deep and well-grounded conviction of sin, which is

the indispensable condition of a living appropriation of the freely offered salvation. For it is also said in the New Testament, "We must through much tribulation enter into the kingdom of God;" "blessed are those that suffer now," and "whom the Lord loveth, he chasteneth." It is to be considered farther, that the New Testament likewise places sin and suffering in the closest connection, that according to it also the discourse cannot be of a merely external misfortune, that the misfortune rather always bears respect, not possibly to any particular sin, but still to the sinfulness, and consequently is always a punishment, and therefore a call to repentance. Among many passages to the point, let only John v. 14, and Luke v..20 be examined. In the former passage disease is threatened by the Lord as a punishment for sin; in the latter it is taken away as a punishment. Then Luke xiii. 1, ss., where the Lord in a general way confirms most pointedly the Old Testament doctrine of recompense, which also lies at the bottom of all the threatenings of judgment against Jerusalem. But had the recompense under the Old Testament come out still more palpably, the impression would only have more immediately produced the counter impression. For the recompense under it must be of force for all ages. The matter, however, is often very incorrectly represented, as if the Psalmist had to do merely with deliverance from the burden of tribulation—as if the forgiveness of sins was for them only a means to an end. The sting of tribulation was rather the matter-of-fact testimony it contained against sin; the refreshing character of deliverance lay especially in this, that it was considered as an actual justification, an evidence of the return of God's favour. To have a gracious God was for them the highest thing.—But that affliction was not the exclusive occasion of a sense of sin in their souls, that this sometimes arose with great power without any thing at all of the other, is shewn in the most striking manner by the two Psalms, xxxii. and li., composed after David's adultery; with which also the historical circumstances mentioned in 1 Sam. xxv. 32, xxiv. 6, 2 Sam. xxiv. 10, are to be comp. Far, therefore, from raising such accusations, we should rather be moved to shame by the depth of those convictions of sin which were experienced by the Psalmists, who were led by what a superficial world calls "the accidental sufferings and afflictions of life," to earnest strivings after repentance, and humble prayer for pardon.

Still, it must not be overlooked, on the other hand, that the allegation, which is to be quite rejected in the form it is usually presented in, has a measure of truth lying at its foundation. The pressure of sin by itself but rarely meets us in the Psalms; the utterance, "I will turn from my iniquities to the Lord," was very seldom spoken from the inward

sentiments alone under the Old Covenant. The prophets, too, make use especially of threatenings of judgment to awaken it. If we compare the penitent and confessional songs in Christian hymn books with the Psalms, we shall at once be sensible of the difference. The Old Testament wanted the most effectual means for producing the knowledge of sin, the contemplation of the sufferings of Christ. In the view of this the Christian poet exclaims, "O children of men, it is your sins alone that have brought about this, since you had quite destroyed yourselves by iniquity;" and to the question, "Who has so pierced thee?" replies, "I, I and my sins." The New Covenant, besides, possesses a more powerful agency of the Spirit, which does not search more into the depths of God, than it lays open the depths of sin. Hence in Christian songs the sense of sin, as it is more independent of outward occasions than formerly, so it is also more openly disclosed, and more delicate in itself, its ground is felt to lie deeper, and also the particular manifestations. It was good that under the Old Covenant the cords of sinful conviction were not strung too tightly, as the full consolation was still not to be found. The gulph closed up again when the sufferings were gone. But the one-sidedness in question is not to be considered as a disadvantage in the Psalms. They have the destination for all ages of the church of bringing this side clearly out, which is of special importance for those who are only beginning the Christian life, and is also peculiarly valuable for the present time, when the edifying and even consolatory view of affliction which arises from regarding it as the punishment of sin, has been very much lost sight of. For the other points of view provision is made in another way.

The Psalms are full of strong representations of the punishment of sin, of the judgments of God upon the wicked. David especially, to whom for a long series of years the punitive righteousness of God served as a shield against despair, uses in this respect very strong language—see for ex. Ps. vii., lii., cix. The punishments, however, which are threatened to the wicked, are only temporal, not eternal, as could not indeed be otherwise from what we shall have occasion to remark, upon the doctrine of immortality in the Psalms, that is, so far as respect is had to the views which were distinctly entertained by the Psalmists themselves. Considered in regard to the matter itself, these threatenings certainly run beyond this earthly life. For the divine righteousness, from which the temporal punishment of sinners proceeds, is an eternal one, and consequently must manifest itself through all eternity, so long as its object, the sinner, exists. Every earthly judgment of God is a prophecy in fact of that which is extra-earthly; every threatening of the one passes also as to its substance into the other; so that in regard to the subject-

matter, it is the punitive righteousness of God alone that is to be thought of. The eternal recompense presently goes along with the temporal whenever the personal and self-conscious continuance of the sinner comes into view. But the Psalms had the mission of preparing the ground for the living apprehension of eternal recompenses, by planting the conviction of the temporal recompense deep in the souls of men—see the section on the doctrine of recompense in my Beitr. Th. iii. How energetically the apprehension of the divine righteousness as exercised in time works in the Psalms, not suffering itself to be moved by the greatest difficulties, and after a severe struggle still always at last rising into victory, is exhibited in a very vivid manner, among other places, in Ps. lxxiii. As in the law, so also in the Psalms, the outward consequences of sin come out much more strongly than the inward, which last, however, it is self-evident were very far from being unknown under the Old covenant. We have only to think of the evil spirit from the Lord, which terrified Saul, and, apart altogether from his outward troubles, and before they began to fall upon him, rendered existence a source of misery to him. This stronger exhibition of the external consequences of sin may partly be explained from this, that the Psalms have commonly to do, not with individual sinners alone, but with whole communities of such, because his promises and threatenings according to the rule have a national bearing. And it is also to be taken into account, that the external consequences are more appropriate for the vivid pictures, in which poetry delights. Yet the ground also lies deeper.

But the Psalms not only threaten hardened sinners with the divine judgments, they also shew to penitents the way by which they may attain first to justification before God, and then to righteousness of life. This is avowedly done in Ps. xxxii., comp. ver. 8, "I will instruct thee and teach thee the way that thou shalt chose." In this Psalm and Psalm li. the method of salvation under the Old Testament is contained in its most complete and concentrated form. The atoning divine compassion forms the objective ground of justification. This was imaged in the symbolik of the Mosaic law by the Capporeth. "The commentary on its name, the invisible inscription which it bore, were the words in which God himself, in Ex. xxxiv. 6, declared his essential character in relation to Israel: Jehovah, Jehovah, God gracious and merciful, long-suffering, and of great goodness and faithfulness, keeping favour for thousands, forgiving iniquity, and transgression, and sin, and not annihilate will he," Beitr. Th. iii. p. 642—words which in a great variety of ways, frequently as in a sort of new republication of the law, are re-echoed in the Psalms, compare on Ps. ciii. 8, cxlv. 8. How deep in the Psalmists was the feeling of the divine compassion, striking its roots down

into the underground of felt sinfulness and nothingness, is most vividly pourtrayed in Psalm ciii.—which, so long as the church of God exists upon earth, will never depart out of her mouth, and in which she will continually celebrate the divine compassion, as she has already done through centuries past. As the indispensable, subjective condition of justification appears the thorough conviction and the free confession of sin—compare Ps. li. 4, and also Ps. xxxii., which is wholly occupied with setting forth the high importance of confession of sin. Upon confession, and prayer which is naturally connected with it (comp. Ps. li. 8-10), follows the forgiveness of sin, a judicial act of God which he freely and righteously exercises in behalf of those who have fulfilled the subjective condition, and which manifests itself in the joyfulness that now succeeds to the deep prostration and consuming remorse of sin. This forgiveness is represented as the greatest of all boons, as the foundation of all salvation. "Blessed is the man (exclaims David in Ps. xxxii. 1, who of all the Psalmists celebrates in the loudest and most joyful strains the forgiveness of sins, as in him also are found the strongest passages upon sin) whose iniquity is taken away, whose sin is covered, to whom the Lord imputes not guilt." "Praise the Lord, my soul (he says in Ps. ciii. 3), who has forgiven all thine iniquity, who heals all thine infirmities." Comp. farther Ps. cxxx. 4.

If we now inquire concerning the relation in which the doctrine of the Psalms here stands to the Christian doctrine upon the same subject, we soon perceive that the two essentially agree. According to the Christian doctrine, also, every thing in the way of merit is excluded; according to it, too, the objective ground of justification is represented as standing in the divine compassion, while the subjective condition is the conviction of sin and the prayer of faith for its forgiveness. Along with this substantial agreement, however, there appears a twofold difference: 1. In the Christian doctrine of justification the merit and satisfaction of Christ appears as the means of atonement provided by the divine compassion, as that through which it becomes possible for the divine righteousness to manifest itself in the forgiveness of sin. In the Psalms, on the other hand, no evidence appears that the writers had obtained an insight into the sacrifice of Christ. In them, indeed, the doctrine of a suffering Messias is contained *directly*, if the Psalms referring to it, in particular Ps. xxii., is taken in the strictest Messianic sense, or indirectly, if it is referred to the suffering righteous man. But we do not find that this doctrine is brought into connection with the doctrine of justification, that the suffering of the Messias was contemplated as vicarious and propitiatory. We are not, however, to infer from the non-appearance of this connection its entire non-existence, as the Psalms are

by no means like doctrinal treatises, and there is found in other passages of the O. T., especially in Isa. liii., an insight into this connection. Yet so much is certainly to be concluded from it, that the connection was kept in the back-ground—that the doctrine of justification through the future work of Christ had not taken hold generally of the conscience of believers—and that the forgiveness of sin, as a matter of common experience, was appropriated only *per fidem implicitam*. But this being the case, the lively faith with which the Psalmists lay hold of the forgiveness of sin, and the great joy with which it filled them, should awaken profound shame in us. For to them, who still had not Christ set before their eyes, it must have been immensely more difficult than to us to answer with confidence whether God's grace is greater than man's sins.

2. The second difference is of far less importance. With the ceasing of the ceremonial law in general sacrifices also ceased, the sin-offering and the thank-offering, which the faithful of the O. T. were required to present, as an outward expression of the internal conditions of justification, and the former, indeed, after even the smaller offences; comp. on Ps. li. 12. That this difference respects merely the form is evident from the doctrine of sacrifices, which pervades the Psalms. The true sacrifices are the internal; such as are merely external are not well-pleasing to God, Ps. xl. 6, l., li. 17, cxli. 2. It was only the sacrifices which were inspirited by the soul of the worshippers that were declared to be in proper harmony with the law, comp. Ps. li. 20, xx. 4, lxvi. 13-15. Now, considering sacrifices as only of a representative nature,—that the essential thing in them was the feeling represented by them of surrender to God (the burnt-offering), of repentance (the sin-offering), of thankfulness (the peace-offering), it is evident that the essence of the worship was not affected by the abolition of these. The substance remained, only its embodiment through an external form has ceased.

We pass now from the doctrine of justification to that of sanctification. Only the justified can do good works, and he *must* do good works—both already taught in the symbolik of the law; com. Beitr. p. 650. The Psalms are entirely pervaded by the doctrine, that God bestows nothing, not in particular the precious gifts, which justification brings, without being sought after; hence, vows stand in very close connection with prayers, and everywhere the sacred bards express themselves deeply grateful for the grace of God; comp. Ps. li., the first part of Ps. xl., Ps. lxvi., lvii. That they could do their part by the mere outward sacrifices, that they could *feed* God, could never be imagined by them with the insight they possessed into the nature of sacrifice. But their gratitude had also to show itself, along with the heartfelt and

joyful confession of the mouth, in the maintaining of a new walk in righteousness. In respect, however, to this holiness of life, as little can be accomplished by one's own powers as in the matter of justification. Here, too, must every thing proceed from God, who, through his Spirit, forms a new life in us. David, in particular, was deeply penetrated by this feeling. In Ps. li. 12, he expressly names the Holy Spirit as the principle of the divine life, and prays God not to take this Spirit from him on account of his sins. He does not make promise to God, that he would again, by his own good deeds, retrieve his misconduct, but entreats that God would give him a pure heart, and renew a right spirit within him, ver. 11, so that he might serve God with a joyful spirit, ver. 13. So also, in Ps. cxliii. 10, he prays, that God would teach him to act so as to please him, and that his good Spirit might lead him by a plain path. According to ver. 13 of Ps. xix., a Psalm of David, God alone can preserve even believers from heinous sin, because of the deep corruption dwelling in their natures, and he would himself inevitably fall into these, unless God's grace continually upheld him. Among the other Psalms, the 119th is most thoroughly pervaded by the conviction, that in the keeping of God's commandments nothing can be accomplished by human power, that here God alone can give the will and the performance. Even the earliest of all the Psalms, the 90th, has the prayer : that the Lord would teach us to number our days, so that we may apply our hearts to wisdom. This conviction, that good thoughts and good works can have their source only in God, has its deepest ground in the insight of the Psalmists into the sinful corruption of human nature. Whoever understands this as it really exists—and that the Psalmists did so we have already shown—he cannot possibly surrender himself to the delusions of Pelagianism.

It is clear, even from this detail, what is to be thought of the allegation of self-righteousness, of irreligious pride, which in recent times has been raised against some of the Psalms—viz., that in the main it is entirely groundless. For it is impossible that there could have been so sheer a contradiction, and the less so, as the Psalms complained of are chiefly such as belong to David. In regard to these Psalms, such, namely, as ground the hope of salvation upon personal righteousness, or derive from this the salvation already received, without expressly bringing into notice its great imperfection, and without stating that we have nothing that we have not received, the remarks already made on Ps. xvii. 1, xviii. 20 ss., xliv. 17-22, may be consulted. We make here only a few additional remarks, by way of supplementing what was advanced there, and in order not to overlook the minimum of truth, which lies at the bottom of the allegation. Though the righteousness spoken of in

the Psalms referred to is only one of endeavour, yet the strong emphasis laid on it will scarcely accord with our feelings. We naturally expect, that, at all events, the other side also—as, indeed, is very strikingly done in Ps. cxliii. 2—the human weakness still cleaving to the righteous would have been brought distinctly out; and since, on account of this only, the humble suppliant, who seeks the divine forgiveness, becomes capable of salvation, we would also have expected that everywhere the eye should have been humbly directed to the heavenly author of the good experienced. As expressive of our subjective disposition, we shall not be able to appropriate to ourselves so thoroughly such portions of the Psalms; we shall scarcely be able, when we try to do so, to read them without stopping. But they will be the more edifying to us, and will so much the more carry with them the concurrence of our whole heart, if we regard them as an admonition, as they were certainly designed by the Psalmist. The point brought out so prominently in them certainly has eternal truth in it, and should be perpetually maintained in the church of God. They seek to impress upon us the truth, that those only can comfort themselves with the expectation of Divine aid, who glorify God in their walk; they meet the delusion, that the children of God and the children of this world are separated from each other merely by idle feelings and vain imaginations; and work against one of the most formidable enemies of salvation—hypocrisy. They are of great importance, especially for the present age, with its tendency towards Antinomianism, and a lazy sentimental Christianity.

In such Psalms as i., xv., xxiv., the call to righteousness is pressed upon the people of God with unbending strictness, without any indication whence the power to comply with the call is to be derived, and how necessary for men, in respect to it, is the pardoning mercy of God; and there the Christian must be conscious of missing somewhat, without misapprehending the deep import of that portion of the truth which is alone displayed.

It is not as if the Psalmist had not recognised such portions of divine truth as are not expressly declared, but for us it is natural to bring them always distinctly into view, at every opportunity to represent strongly the contrast between nature and grace. We find occasion here for the often-repeated remark of Amyrald.: *Traxit aliquid ex legali œconomia.* The difference between the Old and the New Testament is everywhere very fine and delicate, and whoever misapprehends this, whoever in place of a difference puts a contrast, will be farther from the right than he who overlooks the difference altogether. The general canon here is this: only such a difference can be a well-grounded one, as does not

compromise the dignity of the Old Testament as a part of the revelation of God.

According to the commonly-received opinion, the law must have been known to all the members of the Old Covenant only as a constraining letter; they must have submitted to it with dislike, in slavish fear of its punishment and selfish expectation of its reward. But this view holds good only in regard to the great multitude, the rough mass. "Thy law," says David in Ps. xl. 9, "is within my heart"—comp. the remarks on this passage, and on Ps. xxxvii. 31. In Ps. i. 2, he pronounces the man blessed, whose desire is in the law of the Lord—comp. Ps. cxii. 1. According to Ps. xix. 8 ss, the law of the Lord quickens the soul, the commandments of the Lord rejoice the heart, they are more precious than gold, and much fine gold, and sweeter than honey and the honey comb. In like manner another Psalmist in Ps. cxix. exclaims, "How do I love thy law! how agreeable to my taste are thy words! more than honey to my mouth," comp. ver. 97, 111, 127, 165.

The life of the holy singers was governed, not by slavish fear, but by love—not by a law after the letter, but by a law of liberty. Especially are the Psalms of David full of expressions of the most cordial, childlike love to God, of the most heartfelt confidence rooting itself in love, of a personal surrender growing out of this, of delight in God and his service; and so long as the church of God exists upon earth, she will be found warming herself at this fire of love to God, comp. for example, Ps. xviii. 1, Ps. xvi., xxiii., xxxvi., lxii., lxiii., lxxi., ciii., cxlv.; and among other Psalms than those of David, Ps. xlii., xliii.. lxxiii., lxxiv., xci., xciv., xcv., cxviii., cxxi. Nowhere, not even in Ps. cxix., cxx., is there to be found a trace of slavish fear, which arises from a sense of internal separation from God. It is certainly not to be forgotten, however, that the Psalms are the productions of sacred hours of devotion, in which a higher spirit than their own fell upon the Psalmists, and they rose above their ordinary condition. In this last the spirit of sonship undoubtedly had often to maintain a hard struggle with the spirit of bondage, as is very graphically depicted to us in Ps. xxxii. itself, which exhibits something of the conflict now referred to.

The tone of higher joyfulness which more especially pervades the Davidic Psalms—the exclamation, "I will sing and play to thee," did not spring from the ground of slavish fear, which always carries itself with a sunk head and a rueful look, but from the ground of genuine love. This divine love of the Psalmists should tend the more to shame and edify us, as they had not before their eyes such a distinguished proof as we have of the love of God to his people—their love could still not kind e itself at this flame.

An accusation has been brought against the moral spirit of the Psalms in regard to the *revenge* which breathes in some of them. The writers very often pray to God for revenge upon their enemies, or speak of the joy which they and their companions experience upon the revenge executed by God—sometimes they even appear to express themselves the purpose of revenge.

But the latter part of the charge has already been answered on Ps. xli. 11, by the distinction there pointed out between recompense from a spirit of revenge, which the distempered individual merely as such desires and inflicts, and recompense in the service of God, in defence of the blessings and privileges conferred upon us by him. It is recompense or retaliation only in the first sense, that is prohibited in Matth. v. 39, 40. But the same distinction avails also in respect to the wish for recompense, and joy at its infliction. It is here also to be inquired whether the recompense sought and delighted in, was one of mere personal revenge, of irritated sensibility, or for the sake of the divine law, the reality of which must become doubtful when such recompense is allowed to fall into abeyance—with a reference to the nature of God, on which this law is founded, and which manifests itself by way of reaction against its violation—for the sake of the fear of God, which must die, if the praise of this and the punishment of evil should vanish—from zeal for the house of God and the good of his kingdom. Desires of the latter kind could manifestly be cherished only by those who have the most sincere compassion for the trouble and distress that must alight upon the sinful. There are circumstances in which it is right and dutiful in the sense now mentioned, even to pay recompense; others in which one must confine oneself to the desire for it—as David's, for example, in relation to Saul; comp. 1 Sam. xxiv. 13, "The Lord will judge between me and thee, and the Lord will avenge me of thee, and my hand will I not lay upon thee."

Now, that in the Psalms the prayer for divine recompense and joy on account of it, flows not from the first, but from the last source—that the facts respecting it must not be explained on the supposition, that the spirit of love and of placability on the part of the godly under the Old Testament, had not become so prevalent and powerful as it is now in the New Testament, is clear from the emphatic declarations of the law of God against revenge, upon which the holy singers meditated day and night, comp. Lev. xix. 18, Ex. xxiii. 4, 5. The opposition to revenge is so little peculiar to the New Testament, that we might rather say the strongest and most numerous passages against it are to be found in the Old, and Paul in Rom. xii. 19, 20, finds that he cannot more strongly warn against it than in words borrowed from thence. Let the following

passages only be examined, Prov. xxv. 21, xx. 22, xxiv. 17, 18, 29. Job declares in ch. xxxi., that he was ready to take the curse of God upon himself, if he had rejoiced at the destruction of his hater, or exulted when misfortune befell him. He brings in revenge, and delight in evil, in the list of the most heinous crimes. In the apocryphal wisdom also of Jesus, the son of Sirach, the command to love one's enemies holds a chief place, comp. ch. xxviii. 1-11. We might urge too in behalf of David, in whose Psalms the strongest of the passages in question are found, that in the most decided manner he pronounced his abhorrence and disavowal of revenge. In Ps. vii. 4, 5, he invokes the divine vengeance on his head, if he gave way to a spirit of revenge, nay, what is still more, David proved, even in the most trying period of his life, by actual deeds, how much he shuddered at the thought of revenge, comp. 1 Sam. xxiv. 5, 2 Sam. xvi. 10. A memorial of his noble spirit, as abhorring anything like revenge, exists to this day in his lamentation upon Saul's death in 2 Sam. i. He, who could speak so of a fallen enemy, an enemy that had for years sought his life, and inflicted wounds in his soul, which were never properly healed again, could certainly not regard himself as having the privilege of revenge, and could least of all express this in songs which he sung before God, and destined for use in the sanctuary.

But we shall arrive still more determinately at the same result, if we take into account the motives which prompted the sacred bards in their prayers for revenge, or the consequences which they expected to arise from such prayers being answered. They wished and hoped that the stumbling-block which the prosperity of the wicked occasions to faith, and the encouragement which it gives to wickedness, would be taken away—comp. Ps. x. 12; that God would vindicate his endangered honour, Ps. lxxix. 10; that he would manifest his greatness and his righteousness, and thereby awaken the apprehension of these in the minds of believers, and call the world at large to repentance,—comp. Ps. xxxv. 27, xl. 16, lviii. 11, lxiv. 8-10, cxlii. 8. That by the overthrow of the bitter enemies of his church, he sought to have the church delivered from destruction, and along therewith the only party qualified to honour him, and all the spiritual goods he had committed to her, see Ps. lxxix. 6, "Pour out thy wrath upon the heathen that know thee not," &c; where, according to the connection, by the heathen are to be understood the people who had raged against Israel, and whose destruction was the condition of Israel's salvation—not the heathen world generally, for which the Psalmists bore a tender love, and whose reception one day into the kingdom and blessing of God they wistfully anticipated.

Now the question, whether the distinction we have drawn between

personal vindictiveness and thirst for revenge, and recompense in the cause of God, and the affirmation that here the discourse can be only of the latter, is sufficient to justify the Psalmists, coincides with this other question, whether God's righteousness, as it is taught in the Old Testament, was a plain reality, or was merely a rough O. T. representation supplanted by the New. The close connection of the two questions is admitted also by those who bring the accusation against the Psalms. Thus Bauer, in his Moral des A. T. Th. i, s. 295, says: "How could David think otherwise, than that he had a perfect right to curse his enemies, when he had before him, according to his conviction, the example of God?" If God be such as he is represented in the Old Testament, then it was entirely proper for believers to wish that he should shew himself to be as he is, if they did this only in the right sense, not in their own, but in his interest.

There can be no doubt, however, that the idea of the divine compassion is essentially the same in both Testaments. The God of the New is also "a consuming fire," Heb. xii. 29; "it is dreadful to fall into the hands of the living God," Heb. x. 31; to those who fall away after having received the knowledge of the truth, there is, according to Heb. x. 27, "a fearful looking for of judgment and fiery indignation, to consume the adversaries." The divine righteousness has lost so little of its vigour under the New Covenant, that he who despises the far richer means of grace offered under it, becomes the heir of a much sorer punishment than he who perished under the old, Heb. xii. 25. The heart which hardens itself against God's grace, and remains impenitent, heaps to itself wrath against the day of wrath, and the revelation of the righteous judgment of God, Rom. ii. 5. In Matth. xxv. 41, the Saviour represents himself as speaking to those on his left hand the awful word, "Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels;" and both Jerusalem and the world at large were also threatened by him with frightful judgments. In Matth. vii. 1, 2, he declared the law of recompense, which lies as the foundation of the so-called vindictive Psalms. The death, too, of Ananias and Sapphira was a matter-of-fact testimony to the continued energy of the divine righteousness under the New Testament. And whoever has any doubt respecting it, let him read Josephus on the Jewish war.

But there are found in the New Testament threatenings of the divine judgment in the form of a wish, which are quite analagous to the Psalms in question. Of this kind is the woe upon Chorazin, Bethsaida, and Capernaum, Matth. xi. 20, ss.; the manifold woes against the Pharisees, Matth. xxiii.; the word of Peter to Simon the sorcerer, "thy

money perish with thee," in Acts viii. 20; Paul's declaration in 2 Tim. iv. 14, "Alexander the coppersmith did me much evil; the Lord reward him according to his works;" and his exclamation to the high priest in Acts xxiii. 3, "God will smite thee, thou whited wall." The souls of the martyrs cry under the altar for revenge.

Tholuck throws out the question, whether the Psalmists never and in no case mingled with what was in itself holy fire, the unholy fire of personal irritation. But there is furnished to this question a decided negative in the position, which our Lord and his apostles assign to the Psalms generally, by whom they are regarded as a portion of the word of God, and in particular to the so-called vindictive Psalms. It is precisely the most severe of these which are applied to Christ, and considered as spoken by him, and are therefore pronounced worthy of him, —see on Ps. xli., lxix., cix. Then, it is carefully to be considered, that here we cannot think of a momentary outburst of passion, that the fault, if anything of that sort exists at all, must necessarily lie in the fundamental principles. For in the Psalms we have before us not the aimless and inconsiderate expression of subjective feelings, but they were from the first destined for use in the sanctuary; and the sacred authors come forth under the full consciousness of being interpreters of the spiritual feelings of the community, organs of God for the ennobling of their feelings. They give back what, in the holiest and purest hours of their life, had been given to them. That David, like every child of Adam, was not free from impulses of revenge, which, from the liveliness of his feelings, must have been the readier to come upon him, is evident from what is recorded in 1 Sam. xxv. But there was only needed a gentle stirring of his conscience, so that he might speak as he did to Abigail, "Blessed be the Lord God of Israel, which sent thee this day to meet me. And blessed be thy advice, and blessed be thou that I have not come against blood, and avenged myself with mine own hand." And what Abigail effected, must not the presence of the holy One, before whom he stood when he indited his Psalms?—must not the thought of the community, which he would otherwise not have edified, but scandalized, have still more effected? The "passionate impress" which Tholuck would find in particular expressions, falls away as soon as it is considered that we have poetry before us. This also is not to be overlooked, that fervent zeal for God's glory is very apt, at those times when we do not ourselves participate in it, when we cannot sympathise with the sentiment, "The zeal of thine house consumes me," to assume in our view the appearance of passion. We should then rather make an attack upon our own breast, and complain of our lukewarmness and indifference.

The deepest ground of the offence, which has been so extensively spread in our day, against these Psalms, is undoubtedly this, that the curses of the Psalmists are regarded by the egotists as if they had proceeded from their own hearts.

Now it might seem, as if simply to recommend the conduct of the holy singers towards their enemies, were the proper way also to justify it. But this is not precisely the case. We must here keep in view the essential difference between the Old and the New Covenants. The righteousness of God is in both the same; but under the New the divine mercy comes more prominently out, while in the Old it retires more into the back-ground, as regards the disobedient (it is otherwise in respect to the faithful.) According to the procedure of God in this respect, according to his diverse position towards the world, as it has been influenced by the nature of the two œconomies, the procedure of his believing people must also shape itself. This is very strikingly brought out in the passage, Luke ix. 5, ss. When the disciples would have had the Lord to call down fire from heaven upon a village of the Samaritans, appealing to the example of Elias, he answered, "Ye know not what manner of spirit ye are of; for the Son of Man has come not to destroy men's lives, but to save them." Olshausen remarks, erroneously: "The whole form of the expression bears an Old Testament impress; they spake from the standing point of the *jus talionis*." The O. T. impress rather lies in this, that they should so readily have thought of punishment, whereas the thought of conversion and grace, for which the New Covenant had quite other means at command than belonged to the Old, should have come into the foreground: the Redeemer was to come first. That John himself understood thus the declaration of Christ, appears from the frightful threatenings of divine judgment in the Apocalypse, in which we again recognize the same disciple, who once besought that fire might come down from heaven. That the righteousness of God under the New Covenant has lost nothing of its severity, that it has only changed its position (the Revelations of John presuppose his gospel and his epistles) is clear, for example, from Rev. vi. 16, 17, "And they said to the mountains and rocks, fall on us and cover us from the face of him that sitteth upon the throne, and from the wrath of the Lamb." The words of Christ, in which he pointed out to the disciples how, what was right in Elias, would not be right in them, are also spoken to us, in so far as we might be disposed to apply without consideration the Psalms in question to our enemies, and the enemies of God's cause; even though we should do this, not from personal irritation, but in honest zeal for God's glory, as was the case also with the disciples. Just as

Christ did not at first come to condemn the world, but that the world through him might be saved, so also with the Christian, when he sees enmity against God's word, his kingdom or his servants, the first movement of his soul should be to pray to God that he would soften these heard hearts and open these blind eyes—a movement to which the Psalmists also were not strangers, comp. in Ps. vii. 12, "If he turn not," and David's mild address to the enemies in Ps. iv., though it is of rare occurrence in them. That cases might also certainly happen under the New Covenant, in which such confirmed hardness is manifested as drives the mind from thinking of the divine mercy, to think of the divine righteousness, is evident from the passages already quoted.

But this difference between the Old and the New Covenants by no means renders the vindictive Psalms superfluous for us. Viewed in regard to their essential matter, they are just as important for us as for the members of the Old Covenant; as we see also in Luther, Calvin, and others, who, so far from finding them barely tolerable, and with some difficulty vindicated, constantly derived from them a rich source of comfort and support. For us too, who are so much in danger of being infected by the lax views of sin and holiness, which have arisen from the corruption of the times, they are of special importance; and the more so, indeed, the stronger the current of our natural will runs against them. For this counter-will has its deepest ground in this, that we do not consider the sins *without* us as rebellion against God, as an offence against his majesty, because we do not so regard the sins in ourselves. The example of the holy Psalmists is also so far given us for our imitation, as it teaches us not to single out mercy from among the attributes of God, and hold it alone up to view, which cannot be so isolated without losing its essential nature; for the same living conviction of the recompensing righteousness of God, the same hatred against sin, against that primarily, and above all, which dwells in ourselves, is what must inspire us with like zeal for the glory of God, like fervent love for the prosperity and success of God's kingdom.

We come now to the doctrine of the divine order and course of salvation in the Psalms. Moses had represented God as standing in a twofold relation—first, in his general relation to the world, as its almighty creator and governor, and then in his special relation to Israel as the God of their fathers Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, as the founder of a kingdom upon earth, as he who had chosen Israel out of all nations for his peculiar property, and had promised them, on condition of their fidelity and devotedness to him, the richest blessings. But there are not wanting even in Moses indications, from which the more discerning might conclude that the second relation, though for the present a real

one, was still only temporary, and intended to serve as a means for accomplishing the higher and more comprehensive design. This might have been inferred even from the doctrine of Moses upon the first general relation; for, if God is equally the Creator of all men, if they all in like manner bear the image of God, it was not to be supposed that he would abandon the greatest portion of them for ever to themselves. The same conclusion likewise was deducible indirectly from the fact, that rom the creation down to Abraham the whole human race was the object of God's direction and government. Such a beginning rendered it clear, that the later limitation could only be employed as means to a future comprehension. But there are not wanting also in the Pentateuch express declarations. Through the posterity of the patriarchs, blessings were destined to come upon all peoples—Israel was separated for the purpose of blessing all mankind; this idea pervades the whole of Genesis; and according to the conclusion of the book, Gen. xlix. 10, there was one day to arise out of the tribe of Judah a great Restorer and Prince of Peace, to whom all nations would be subject.

Now, if we compare with all this the declarations of the Psalmists upon the same subject, we shall find that they not merely apprehend correctly the instructions given by Moses, but that they also have attained through the enlightenment of the Spirit of God to greater clearness and distinctness of view. The Psalms were not in general designed to unfold new revelations of doctrine, but only to represent the feelings which were called forth by those already given. It is true, however, that a prophetical element also found its way into the Psalmodic poetry —though it is not to be overlooked, that between Moses and the Psalms there still lies an important intermediate link, the great promise in 2 Sam. vii., which exerted a most powerful influence afterwards.

When the Psalmists speak of the present, they celebrate with lively gratitude the pre-eminence which God had given to Israel over all the heathen through his election of them to be his covenant people, through the revelation of his law, the great proofs he had given of his goodness during the past, and his gracious presence still in the sanctuary. "He made known his ways to Moses, to the children of Israel his wonders," Ps. ciii. 7. "God is known in Judah, in Israel his name is great; and his tabernacle was at Salem, and his dwelling in Zion," it is said in a Psalm composed in the age of Hezekiah, Ps. lxxvi. 2, 3; and in another composed in the time of Nehemiah, "He declared to Jacob his word, to Israel his statutes and judgments; he did not so to the heathen, and his statutes they know not," Ps. cxlvii. 19, 20.

But they are so far from suffering themselves to be led by this grateful joy into a narrow and one-sided particularism, that they rather

anticipate with longing hope the glorious future, when all the heathen will repent of their apostacy from God, and return to him, when they shall become members of his kingdom. This view is especially dear to David, and of great account with him. It is brought out mainly, though not exclusively, in the Psalms of David.

The hope as to the future reception of the heathen among the people of God, has many grounds and occasions for itself in the Psalms. Sometimes it rises out of the experience then enjoyed of the victorious energy of the Lord, in which faith saw a pledge of the future subjection of the whole might of the world under his sceptre. Thus, in ver. 29–32 of Ps. lxviii., it springs forth in connection with the victory of David's most formidable enemies, the Syrians and Ammonites, by the help of the Lord; in Ps. xlvii. with Jehoshaphat's victory over various heathen nations; and in Ps. lxxxvii. the joyful events under Hezekiah served to develope the germ which continually slumbered among the people of the hope of a converted world. In Ps. xci.–c., this hope discovers itself in connection with another, and certainly in some respects opposite point of view. It is brought in here to meet the fainting and doubts of Israel on account of the frightful ascendancy of the worldly power then begun to which Israel was destined for a long time to succumb. The Psalmist looks onward to the future glorious manifestations of the Lord which turn upon this relation. In the Davidic Psalm lxvii., the confidence that the nations shall still some time be brought to praise the Lord, is grounded upon his good and righteous government, which they primarily apprehend from his procedure toward his people, in particular, from the bestowal upon them of rich blessings, by which they were drawn into close fellowship with him. In Ps. lxxii., the manifestation of the glory of the Lord in the vindication of suffering righteousness, exercises over all the heathen an attractive influence. In Ps. cii. 22, David sees how the peoples gather themselves together, and the kingdoms, to serve the Lord, attracted and drawn through the salvation which Zion had experienced in the time of her distress. According to ver. 4, 5, of Ps. cxxxviii., composed by David, the kings of the earth will turn to the Lord, on account of the future elevation of the depressed David. Finally, the culminating point is formed by the Psalms, in which the conversion of the heathen is represented as the work of the Messias, and he himself as the great enlarger of the kingdom of God. To him belong, according to Ps. ii. 8, the heathen, from one end of the earth to the other. In Ps. cx., he appears as the conqueror of the heathen world. "He reigns," according to ver. 8 of Ps. lxxii., the production of Solomon, "from sea to sea, and from the river to the ends of the earth," and this universal supremacy he is to win, not by dint of arms, but by his

righteousness and love, which he should show in behalf of the poor and oppressed. In Ps. xlv., the heathen nations are introduced under the image of companions of the bride, with whom, not less than with her, the King is united in love.

That there must be *Messianic Psalms* is evident alone from this, that the Lord, after his resurrection, proved to his disciples, that every thing which had happened to him had been announced before-hand, not only in the other books of Scripture, but also specially in the Psalms, Luke xxiv. 44. It also presents itself as a thing that might certainly be expected, when we consider the large place which the revelation of the Messiah has in the law, and especially in the writings of the prophets. It is incredible, that an announcement which was uttered so repeatedly, and so expressly, by the servants of God, which, according to the testimony of history, had made so powerful an impression upon the minds of the people, had sunk so deeply into their views and feelings, should not have been often re-echoed in the Psalms, which contain the people's answer to the divine revelations, and express the feelings which these served to call forth; in which all is presented to our view that powerfully stirred the minds of the people.

A great part of the Messianic Psalms connect themselves with the formative epoch in the history of the hope concerning the Messiah, and with the promise in 2 Sam. vii., which composed a large section in David's spiritual life. First, those Psalms come here into consideration, which do not rise above the radical promise in definite intimations; which speak of the grace that God had shown to David's seed, by assuring them of a dominion destined to survive all that is earthly, without expressly naming the Messiah, and without excluding a reference to the lower and immediate posterity of David. To this class belong among the Psalms of David himself: Ps. xviii., where he celebrates the grace which God "shows to David and his seed for evermore," and connects the thought of the salvation he had already received with that of the future, which was rendered sure to him by the promise in 2 Sam vii.; Ps. xxi., where, in the name of the people, he gives thanks for the word of promise; Ps. lxi., where, during the period of Absalom's revolt, he prays for the deliverance of the kingdom of David on the ground of that promise; Ps. ci.-iii., where, in the name of his seed, he gives utterance to holy purposes, prays in the midst of afflictions, and at length, in a solemn *Tedeum*, renders thanks for the redemption, of which his faith in the promise made him assured. Finally, the cycle of Ps. cxxxviii. to cxlv., the prophetical legacy of David, in which, at the beginning, he thanks the Lord for his promise, at the close, rejoices over its accomplishment, and, in the middle, warns his seed to beware of what would

diminish the blessing of the promise, and consoles them under the afflictions that awaited them.

Among the Psalms of other authors, there belong to this class: Ps. lxxxix., where, in the immediate prospect of the prostration of David's throne by the Chaldeans, the people entreat the Lord, on the ground of his plighted word of promise, to remove the apparent contradiction between the reality and the word; Ps. cxxxii., where, in times of deep depression, a new reanimation of David's seed and kingdom was hoped for from the promise given in Samuel.

The second class consists of Psalms, in which the final reference of the original promise is alone brought prominently into view, which are occupied exclusively with the Messias, as the person in whom what was promised of glory to the seed of David must be found to reach its proper end and issue. We have no right to contend against the acknowledgment of such personal Messianic Psalms. The knowledge of the final reference of the promise to the Messias might very readily suggest itself to David even in a human way. The promise of the great Restorer could not be unknown to him, who was to spring out of the stem of Judah, and to whom the obedience of the peoples was to be rendered. The promise granted to him must have stood in opposition to this announcement, if the latter was referred to any individual that did not belong to his seed. It was quite natural to interpret the one by the other—to add to Gen. xlix. the stem from 2 Sam. vii., and to 2 Sam. vii. from Gen. xlix., the culminating of what was spoken of the stem in a person of great distinction. And why also—since it cannot be denied, that the prophets knew the allusion of the promise in 2 Sam. vii. to the Messias—should this knowledge not be attributed to David, who ascribes to himself prophetical dignity in 2 Sam. xxiii. 1, to whom the same also is ascribed by our Lord in reference to Messianic objects and events in Matth. xxii. 43, and who says of himself in 2 Sam. xxiii. 2, that the Spirit of the Lord spake through him, and his word was on his tongue. But the actual existence of personal Messianic Psalms is put out of all doubt by the declaration of our Lord in Matth. xxii. 41 ss., comp. on Ps. cx., and confirmed by the unforced interpretation of Ps. ii., cx., lxxii., xlv., themselves.

The Messianic announcement in these Psalms takes its starting-point from the relations of the present. David must, according to 2 Sam. vii., represent the Messias as his successor upon the throne as king. All, therefore, that in this respect had been granted to him, the victories which he obtained, by God's help, over the heathen nations, the enlargement of the boundaries of his kingdom, the splendour of his reign, must serve to him,—who understood that the gift conferred in the original pro-

mise could not be withdrawn, and that it made the boundaries of his empire as wide as those of the world—as a ladder upon which he might rise to the apprehension of a Messias in glory, of a conqueror over the heathen world, of the mighty hero, who would not rest till he had subjected the whole earth to his sceptre, and who would suppress with a powerful hand every attempt at revolt. Thus arose Ps. ii. and cx. While in these Psalms of David, the relations of his own time formed the groundwork, hence presenting the Messias to our view, as fighting, conquering, spoiling, extending the limits of his kingdom into the infinite, the Messianic representation given in Ps. lxxii., the composition of Solomon, rises upon the basis of *his* time. He presents to us the Messias as the true Prince of Peace, only imperfectly imaged by Solomon himself, his kingdom as a righteous administration of peace. The relations of Solomon's time, also, form the ground of the representation given in Ps. xlv., which is very closely connected with Ps. lxxii.

The bridge between the two classes of Psalms, which rested upon 2 Sam. vii., is formed by the declarations of David in 2 Sam. xxiii., where he beholds in the spirit a ruler out of his house, ruling in the fear of God, under whose government rises a cloudless sun, and the earth abounds in fruitfulness, while the wickedness that lifts itself up against him is reduced to subjection. The "ruler among men" is primarily an ideal person. This appears, from the corresponding expression in ver. 5, "my house." But the ideal person points to the real, in whom what was here said of the kingdom of David was one day to find its full realization, and with an eye to this personage has the personification been applied.

Beside the Messianic Psalms which rest upon 2 Sam. vii., there are still to be considered the typical Messianic Psalms. Every truly righteous person is to be regarded as a type of Christ—of him who is the absolutely righteous one. Now, what might meet such a person in so far as he was righteous, what he received, how he conducted himself, this is justly to be viewed as a prophecy respecting Christ, in whom the idea was to be perfectly realized—with the very same right, indeed, with which we inversely apply to ourselves what is written of the manifested Christ, and consider it as a prophecy respecting his members. It lies in the nature of things, that the number of the Messianic Psalms in this sense cannot be very strictly bounded; the most of them contain a Messianic element, especially the plaintive Psalms, yet not exclusively these—as little as the suffering and humbled Christ is the whole Christ. The Messianic reference is found peculiarly strong in those of the typical Psalms, which bear respect, not to a single individual, but to an ideal person, that of the righteous, and represent his life, his sufferings, his feelings,

and the divine aid, which was imparted to him. To this class belong a whole series of the Psalms of David, vi., xvi., xxii., xxxv., xxxviii., xl., xli., lxix., lxx., lxxi., cii., cix. These Psalms, which we see most explicitly referred to in the New Testament along with the direct Messianic Psalms to Christ, in particular Ps. xxii., xli., lxix., would stand in a very close relation to the others, even though no trace could be pointed out in them of a conscious reference to Christ on the part of the Psalmist. For, the ideal, which they describe, became in Christ a reality. Every other pious individual could appropriate their contents only in part and relatively—only under a constantly repeated: "Lord have mercy on me," and "God be merciful to me a sinner." Christ alone found himself perfectly delineated in them. Since in them righteousness and the deepest sufferings, springing from the enmity of the wicked world, are set forth as inseparably united, and suffering righteousness has salvation joined to it and the execution of judgment upon the enemies, he found in them his course plainly chalked out beforehand. We are conducted, however, still farther, and even to the very borders of the direct reference to the suffering Messias, by the fact, that in some Psalms, which refer to the suffering righteous, David evidently had in view, beside the individual and the people, his own seed also—comp. Ps. cii., and the person, in whom that seed was to culminate—comp. Ps. cx. These Psalms, from which also light falls upon the others, form at the same time the bridge between the Psalms of the suffering righteous, and those which lean upon 2 Sam. vii. For, that in them also such a leaning exists in regard to one side, appears from a comparison of Ps. cxxxviii.-cxlv. David was himself too much pierced through by his afflictions for this point not to present itself vividly to the eye of his mind and to be expressed in his Psalms, anxiously busied as he so often was, from the time he received the promise in 2 Sam. vii., with thoughts regarding the future state and destiny of his seed.

It has often been sought in regard to a number of these Psalms, in particular Ps. xvi., xxii., xl., lix., to refer them exclusively to the suffering Messias. But that this cannot be maintained, has been shown in the commentary on the Psalms. The reference to the suffering Messias occurs only as one of the different radii, which proceed from the centre of the righteous—the private individual, the people, the seed of David, the Messias; and is only indicated in a gentle and somewhat hidden manner, even in Ps. cix., where still it is brought out more distinctly than in the rest.

We come now, in conclusion, to the doctrine of immortality, or more correctly of *eternal life*. The belief of immortality and a future

recompense was in various ways prepared in the Pentateuch. The single fact is here of great importance, that according to its teaching, death is not the natural and necessary attendant of human existence, but the wages of sin. With this view of death, faith in an eternal life must of necessity break forth as soon as the hope of redemption enters—the hope of having the root restored that was lost in Adam. As death came through sin into the world, so must it again be abolished by redemption, which restores paradise—see Isa. xi. Farther, man was made, according to Gen. i. 26, 27, in God's image; and in that lies the possibility, not merely of immortality in the general, but of a blessed or a wretched immortality, of eternal life, or condemnation. If we have in the doctrine of the divine likeness the *anthropological* foundation of the doctrine of immortality, the doctrine taught in the Pentateuch respecting God likewise points on all hands to the same conclusion. Even the absolute spirituality of God, his entire separation from everything earthly, points in that direction. For it delivers the soul from the most dangerous enemy of faith in respect to an eternal life, a necessary connection with what is seen and temporal. The unlimited omnipotence of God assures us of his being *able*, while the greatness of his love, as that discovers itself especially in his dealings with his people, assures us of his being *willing*—which was already indicated by our Lord in Matt. xxii. 31, 32. That God should enter into so close and endearing a relation to man, as we find him doing with the patriarchs, would be a contradiction, if man's life were to be bounded only by the present existence. But the most direct preparation made by the Pentateuch, consists in its constantly and diligently enforcing the doctrine of the temporal recompense—comp. on this subject my Beitr. Th. iii., s. 577, ss., and the Introd. to Ps. xxxvii. Experience shows that where this doctrine has struck its root, faith in an eternal recompense of itself springs up, but that where this foundation is wanting, the building of a belief in immortality rests upon the sand, and is liable to be thrown down by the first blast.

But while it is true that the Pentateuch contains the best preparation for a faith in immortality, it is not less true that it did little to call forth directly this faith. A considerable number of passages undoubtedly point to a simple immortality. But only one contains a distinct allusion to it—the narrative of Enoch's translation; in which it is of special importance to remark that his walk with God is intentionally and expressly placed in a causal connection with his being taken by God. And this one passage also manifestly bears an enigmatical character. It tends still more than the want of any other positive declarations to give the impression, that the original revelation wished to spread a veil of

secrecy over this doctrine, the blessed influence of which pre-supposed conditions, which could not then be formally brought out.

In the Psalms also there are preparations of various kinds for faith in respect to eternal life. To that, however, on which Œhler (V. T. sententia de rebus post mortem futuris, Stuttg. 1846, p. 72) lays so much stress, we cannot attach any weight. He has endeavoured to find passages in the Psalms, in which the authors raise themselves above the Mosaic doctrine of the inseparable connection between righteousness and a state of outward prosperity, in which they were so elevated by a sense of the favour and fellowship of God, as to regard such an external felicity as far beneath them. No such passages, when the subject is more narrowly considered, are to be found. The pure love of the mystics, and still more the resignation of the philosophers, is quite foreign to the Psalms. The old Mosaic doctrine of the inseparable connection between righteousness and prosperity pervades the Psalms from begining to end; and the sacred bards wrestle and fight to maintain it against all assaults. In Ps. iv. 7, lxiii. 3, the contrast is not between God and prosperity, but of prosperity without God, and of adversity with God. The latter is better than the former. For, he who is united to God, is sure of what is really good even in the midst of trouble. On the other hand, prosperity without God is uncertain and transitory. How far Ps. lxxxiv. 10, is removed from the pure love of the mystics, is evident from the connection with ver. 11. The internal connection with God never appears in contrast with or even as a supplement to prosperity, but always as a pledge and security for this—comp. on Ps. lxiii. where the hope in regard to the future raises itself upon the ground of the internal connection with God. In Ps. xlii. 8: "The Lord commands his loving-kindness in the day time, and in the night his song is with me," the Psalmist, indeed, rejoices in the internal consolations which remained with him in the midst of his outward troubles. But with the song the prayer for the return of prosperity is immediately coupled. Then, we can the less suppose such a preparation for faith respecting eternal life to have really existed, as there is found no trace of it whatever in the other scriptures. In the prophets, who first lifted off the veil, the foundation of this faith is not the abolition of the Mosaic doctrine of recompense, but the firm conviction of its reality which in the New Testament also is not opposed, but rather powerfully confirmed.

A real germ, however, of the faith in an immortal existence is contained in those passages which express a confident expectation of deliverance from threatening danger, whether in reference to individuals or to the whole community—such as Ps. xlviii. 14, and the passages

there quoted. He, who in the one could so confidently expect the other, could and indeed must have looked for redemption from the already existing desolation of death. In one of these passages, Ps. xvi., the Psalmist raises himself in the face of such a danger by the power of faith into a triumph over death itself, certainly having respect to the very imminent danger of death, and in another, Ps. lxxiii. 26, he supposes the actual entrance of death in order to triumph over it.

There is a germ also of this faith of immortality in those places where the redemption of the community from political death is spoken of with undoubting confidence, on the ground of what is written in Deut. xxxii. 39, "I kill and I make alive;" for ex. Ps. lxxxv. 6, lxxx. 18, lxxi. 20; or those again which speak of the redemption of individuals, from the deepest distress, as of a resurrection from the dead—comp. Ps. xxx. 3, xviii. 5, lvi. 13, lxxxvi. 13. The reviving of the dead in a figurative sense contains the pledge of it in a literal one.

Persons have often refused to be satisfied with such passages as contain the germ of a faith in immortality, but have sought to point out in various passages the full development of the doctrine. In reference to the passage Ps. xvii. 15, where even De Wette finds the hope uttered of a blessed immortality, to Ps. xc., on which Stier lays considerable stress, or to Ps. xlviii. 14, lii. 8, 9, which Tholuck holds to be decided proofs we must here simply refer to our exposition. We would only enter a little into the consideration of the passages, to which importance is attached by Œhler in the work above noticed, and Böttcher de inferis. In Ps. xvi. the Psalmist, indeed, triumphs over death itself; but in this he manifestly thinks, not of death as already entered, but of the danger of death by which he was surrounded. In Ps. lxxiii. 26, Œhler contends against the hypothetical construction of the words, "my flesh and my heart fails," q. d., though it should fail, but by God's grace matters will not come so far. But he overlooks that this is necessarily demanded by the *for* which connects the two following verses with that, and also by the parallel passages in the book of Job; farther, that by making ver. 26 refer to a blessed immortality, the passage would be taken entirely out of connection with the whole Psalm, which bears throughout upon the territory of the present life; and finally, that the Psalm, according to ver. 1, has, though not an exclusive, yet at least a concurrent national bearing. In like manner efforts have vainly been made to extract from Ps. xlix. 15 the hope of a deliverance from Sheol, though the whole Psalm has respect to the recompense on this side of eternity. In ver. 7, to which ver. 15 forms the contrast, the discourse is not of death in general, but of an untimely and violent death; and Sheol appears as the dwelling-place of the wicked, only in so far as they terminate their days before they are

half spent, and descend thither before the time that the ordinary fate of mortality would have brought them to it. The whole misunderstanding has been occasioned by this, that the Psalmist draws a veil over the ultimate departure of the godly into Sheol, as a fact which had nothing to do with his design.

The fact that the Psalms, while they contained the germ of the doctrine of eternal life, did not give any clear and definite utterance to the doctrine, may appear extraordinary, as they partly belong to a later period than the prophetical passages, in which the doctrine is unquestionably propounded. Isaiah announces the taking away of death and the resurrection of the dead in Messiah's time: "The Lord destroys death for ever, and the Lord wipes away the tears from off all faces," xxv. 8; and, again, in ch. xxvi. 19, "Thy dead shall live, my corpses shall rise up; for a dew of light (= of salvation) is thy dew, and the earth will give forth the deceased." Ezekiel represents, in ch. xxxvii., God's victorious energy over the death of his people, in colours which are so distinctly drawn from the resurrection, that the prophetical delineation, as it could only be drawn by one who was himself possessed of faith in the resurrection, could not but exercise an important influence on the establishment of this faith. Finally, the most explicit passage upon the resurrection of the dead is Dan. xii. 1, ss. But the scattered nature of the prophetic intimations of the doctrine of eternal life is itself an evidence that we are not necessarily to expect any utterance of this faith in the Psalms. For the Psalms, and more particularly those of later times, which always formally speak from the consciousness of the community, present not the individual, but the general, that only which, though partly latent, yet existed in the consciousness of the whole community. But this was not the case with the doctrine of eternal life. It was a good while till the leaven of the prophetic declarations penetrated the whole mass, which certainly it could not fail to do in its own time. If the Psalms, as some modern critics would have us believe, really reached down to the time of the Maccabees, and were in great part composed about that time, when the faith of eternal life had already become deeply rooted in the minds of the people, they could not possibly have failed to give utterance to this faith. But if, on the other hand, the time of Nehemiah formed the utmost limit, it cannot seem strange that such utterances are not found in them.

It may possibly seem as if the absence of the doctrine of immortality were hostile to the supposition of the Psalmists having been under the special influence of the Spirit of God. But this is not the case. They have not uttered anything erroneous; they have only not declared the whole truth. The former would only have been true, had they

maintained the annihilation of man after death. They are far, however, from doing this. If we deny to the Psalmists the doctrine of immortality, it is only immortality in the Christian sense, the doctrine of the blessedness of the righteous, and of the condemnation of the wicked. According to them, all men go at death into Sheol.* That this is not a mere figment, but a real and proper existence, is confirmed by the doctrine of the New Testament, as also by the prophets, who plainly announce the doctrine of the resurrection, while neither class of writers thought of renouncing the old doctrine of Sheol, but rather express their belief in it;—see Matth. xii. 40, Luke xvi. 22, ss., 1 Pet. iii. 18, 19, iv. 6, Phil. ii. 10, where, beside heavenly and earthly things, also the things under the earth are mentioned as being subject to Christ; Rev. xx. 14, according to which Hades continues even to the final judgment, when the preparatory gives place to the ultimate. If in the New Testament the word Hades, = Sheol, is used only in reference to dead sinners (see, however, Acts ii. 27, 31), yet in point of fact there can be no doubt it exists also for the righteous. An intermediate state is taught also in reference to them. The removal of it takes place only at the second coming of Christ—see for ex. Heb. xi. 39, 40. Wherefore, as far as the saints of the Old Testament attained in their knowledge, they were quite right, they were only excluded from farther light. But it is error alone which divine inspiration excludes, not the defect and imperfection of knowledge. There would, however, have been error in the O. T. here, only if it had put in place of the Christian doctrine of eternal life, the rationalistic belief, which denies the intermediate region, and regards the individual whom it entirely severs from connection with the whole, as immediately entering on the full enjoyment of blessedness. In regard to the doctrine respecting Sheol itself, there certainly is a difference between the O. and the N. Testament, inas-

* Against those who would identify Sheol with the grave, see Œhler, p. 20. Böttcher, p. 70. There is no instance of what the former seeks to maintain, that sometimes the things which properly belong to Hades, and those to the sepulchre, are mixed up in the description of the condition of the dead. In regard to the meaning of the word, there is no good reason for abandoning the simple and natural derivation from שׁאל, to demand; Mich.: a poscendo dictus quod non desinat postulare et homines alios post alios ad se trahere. Sheol, therefore, so named, because it demands all life; comp. Job xxxi. 30, "to demand in cursing his soul." It is precisely insatiableness which is represented as characteristic of Sheol, in Prov. xxvii. 20: "hell and the abyss are never satisfied;" xxx. 16; Isa. v. 14. In Hab. ii. 5, the Chaldean is compared to Sheol, because "he gathereth unto him all nations, and heapeth unto him all people." This derivation, against which, in modern times, no proper proofs, but only strong affirmations, have been brought, has also the predominantly poetical use of Sheol on its side; and the fact, that the word never stands with the article, is to be explained by its being properly the infinitive.

much as in the N. Testament a separation is represented as already existing even there between the righteous and the wicked. This doctrine is contained only in two passages, Luke xvi. 22, ss., and 1 Pet. iii. 19, (See Steiger there). The others, in particular, "To-day wilt thou be with me in Paradise," Luke xxiii. 43, refer to the relations which were first introduced by Christ, who went away to prepare a place for his disciples, John xiv. 3; so that they might henceforth wish to depart and be with him, Phil. i. 23. Here, then, lies a progress not in knowledge, but in the matter itself. But still in respect to this difference now pointed out, there is no error in the Old Testament, but only a less degree of knowledge. The other differences which Hahn (V. T. sententia de natura hominis) has sought to point out are found on examination not to be tenable. According to the author, the O. T. conducts the soul, נפש, into Sheol, and the N. T. the spirit, πνεῦμα. But the passages which he has adduced in support of the first statement do not apply; they only speak of a going down of the soul into hell, which does not necessarily import that it remains there, but rather the very reverse; for just on account of the danger of the soul might it be inferred, that it would be thought upon. The only passage quoted by Œhler, Job xiv. 22, in which the נפש must stand of the soul as existing in Hades, is to be regarded as throughout poetical. The soul of the dead in reality laments as little as the body in reality is sensible of pain. To both poetically the feeling is attributed, which they would have experienced if they had been susceptible of any. With how much greater an appearance of truth might we discover in a passage of the New Testament, Rev. vi. 9, that ψυχαὶ is a designation of souls in the intermediate state. But on closer examination it is found that this view would also be inadmissible. The ψυχαὶ are the murdered souls, and the word *blood* might as well have stood.—See v. 10 and the original passage Gen. iv. 10. The subject in ver. 10 is not the souls, but the races. If one of the two were found in the N. Testament, נפש or רוח, the latter might also stand there. For נפש is too closely connected with the body to be able to exist without it, to lead a purely incorporeal existence. No contrary meaning is yielded by such passages as Eccl. xii. 7, Ps. civ. 29, Job xxxiv. 14. For they do not exclude this, that though the spirit returns to him who gave it, yet the ruin as it were of the spirit may remain.—See 1 Kings x. 5, Eccl. ix. 10. רוח is not merely the divine breath of life, but also the human spirit created by that (Numb. xvi. 22, Zech. xii. 1) which may, indeed, become faint if it does not receive further supplies from the fountain-head, and incapable of action if it loses its organ, but still can never altogether cease to be. But if the matter were still doubtful, from the fact that the N. Testament speaks this without

exception of the spirits, and not of the souls of the departed (comp. 1 Pet. iii. 18, where the πνεῦμα is the spiritual life common to all men with Christ; ver. 19, where the discourse is of the spirits in prison, whereas presently of living men ψυχαὶ is used, 1 Pet. iv. 6, Luke xxiv. 37, Hebr. xii. 23), it may with certainty be concluded that in the O. Testament also the spirit only can be intended. For where a difference cannot be firmly established, there an agreement is to be supposed. The presumption is in favour of this.

A second difference, and even a manifest contrast Hahn would find in this, that according to the O. Testament the inhabitants of the intermediate state are without consciousness, while in the N. Testament they have not merely self-consciousness, but also the knowledge of things which take place on the earth. But the distinction vanishes when we have set aside what is here attributed of too little to the Old and too much to the New Testament. Certainly in the O. Testament the region of the dead does appear as noiseless; Ps. xciv. 17, xxxi 17, Sheol is "the land of forgetfulness," where "one thinks of nothing," Ps. lxxxviii. 12, and in death there is no celebration of God's praise and remembrance of him, Ps. vi. 5, cxv. 17, xxx. 9. But that according to the O. Testament mode of contemplation, self-consciousness only slumbers, does not absolutely cease with the departed, that it continues as to ability in full energy with departed, this is shown more clearly and certainly, than could be done by any particular poetical passage, by the narrative in 1 Sam. xxviii., where Samuel is presented before us in the full vigour of his personal existence. The supposition, which has never been made but from felt difficulty or wrong bias, that the appearance of Samuel was regarded by the historian as a cheat, has been again repeated by Böttcher. But it is contradicted by the fact of the communication itself, which can only be explained, if the event was considered of deeper import by the author, by the circumstance that Samuel appeared unexpectedly to the woman herself, and to her horror, as also that he spake in perfect accordance with his character, and uttered a prediction which the event confirmed to be true. We see plainly here that those who went into Sheol were not lost; for what by a sudden excitation can be again roused into energy, that, being still secured in perpetuity of being, will sometime be awakened again out of slumber. But it does not follow from any of the Psalms in question that consciousness is to be regarded as one of complete repose. Were this the case, they would stand in opposition to other passages of the O. Testament, where the contrary is represented; in particular, to the description given of the reception of the king of Babylon in Sheol in Isa. xiv. It is not to be overlooked that in all those passages of the Psalms there was a

reason for bringing strongly out the one side of the truth, and to let the other, which still resides in the Sheol, fall into the background. In all of them there was a foundation to be laid for the prayer that God would not send the suppliant too soon into Sheol; so that the rendering prominent of the shadowy side of the picture was quite in its place. If we turn to the N. Testament, the only passage that properly comes into consideration is Luke xvi. 22, ss. For the others refer to those asleep in Christ, who has also for the intermediate state brought life to light, 2 Tim. i. 10. But from that passage straightway to conclude that the departed under the O. Testament possessed a clear self-consciousness, and even a knowledge of what was passing upon earth, is entirely to overlook that we have here to do with a parable, in which only the fundamental relations are of material importance. But even with the dead in Christ the state up to the resurrection is represented pre-eminently as a rest from trouble and affliction, Rev. xiv. 13, as a blessed sleep, 1 Thes. iv. 13-15, v. 10, or, however, as a blessed waking-sleep. We cannot think of it otherwise without making the resurrection superfluous, upon which Scripture lays such great stress, behind which it makes the intermediate state fall so decidedly into the back-ground, without overlooking the importance of the corporeal part of our natures, and egotistically dissevering the individual from his connection with the general community.

It might appear farther, that the deficiency of faith in regard to eternal life must have deprived the holy singers of all vigour of faith and all joy in suffering. And certainly it is not to be denied that great and heavy temptations arose to the believers of the O. Testament, from their not having had a clear view opened up to them into a future state of existence (comp. Job xiv 14, and the Introd. to Ps. xxxix., where it is shewn how the instructive character of the Psalm is the greater on this very account, that its author still retained faith in the circumstances in which he was placed). But it is also not to be overlooked that the *substance* of faith respecting eternal life, even though the clear apprehension of it failed, is everywhere found there, where the powers of the future world have sunk into the soul; and then, that under the Old Covenant the extraordinary sources of consolation flowed the more copiously that the ordinary ones were so scanty. An attentive consideration of the transition to the Psalms, shews us how powerful the workings of the Spirit then were, and how mightily he raised the soul above trouble and death and self.

[In case, by observing a total silence, I should be supposed to entirely concur in the doctrinal statements contained in the last portion of

these Treatises, which, as a whole, are admirable, I must take leave to notice, in a sentence or two, that I am not prepared to assent to every particular, and, more especially, to two representations given under the heads of Eternal Life, and the Messianic Psalms. In regard to the former, I cannot think that the reason why such a reserve is maintained concerning it in the Psalms, is, that the doctrine had not yet penetrated the mass of the Old Testament worshippers. The author himself has stated, p. lxxxii., that, "with the view given of death in the 3d ch. of Genesis, faith in an eternal life must of necessity have broken forth;" and both from this, and from the hope of redemption even then brought in, and, indeed from the whole tenor of revelation and promise made to the patriarchs, it is to me perfectly incredible, that any intelligent and believing Israelite should have been without faith as to a future state of recompense. Having stated my views, however, on this point elsewhere (in the 1st vol. of my Typology), I simply add here, that the reason, in my opinion, why such a vail to the last is thrown over the future world in the Psalms, while the prophets open up some distinct glimpses of it, arises from the different character and aim of the psalmodic and prophetical writings. The Psalms are the spiritual songs of the ancient Church, adapted throughout to her typical condition and worship, which necessarily presented the future under the form and shadow of the present, and the Psalms *must* speak in the same style. The prophets, however, agreeably to the end of their mission, *avowedly* directed the minds of the people to the prospect of good things to come, and therefore could not but occasionally, especially after the things belonging to the typical state were hopelessly shattered and broken, lift up to some extent the vail from the future.

In regard to the Messianic Psalms, or rather to the peculiar view of the author respecting some of these, such as xvi., xxii., xl., lxix., &c., that they give a representation merely of the ideal righteous man, and are fulfilled in Christ only, because he was the only one in whom the idea was perfectly realized, I think the view is liable to strong objections. The reference made to some of these Psalms in New Testament Scripture, as having spoken directly and exclusively of Christ, seems too express and pointed to be satisfied by such a representation. Some of them, especially Ps. xxii. and lxix., are so full of minute particulars, and particulars, some of which could scarcely be referred, with any appearance of truth, to another than Christ, that to have drawn such representations of a character still only ideal seems very strange and unnatural. Besides, I do not see how, if such individualizing and pointed delineations might correctly be referred to a merely ideal righteous person,

those other, which our author admits to be direct Messianic Psalms, Ps. ii., xlv., lxxii., cx., might not with equal justice be ascribed to an ideal *son* of David, or his house generally. And I conceive it to be, on the whole, the simplest and most natural, as well as most scriptural view of the Psalms in question, that David, being enlightened by the Spirit respecting his own typical calling, history, and kingdom, was led in them to picture forth, with some lines drawn from his own case, but with some also altogether peculiar to Messiah, the future condition and experiences of his great son and antitype.—*Translator.*

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